politics

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"Why Am I Fighting?"

Editor's Note: It is a cardinal principle of "Politics" editorial policy to give both sides a fair hearing. In the matter of the war, however, the Editor has found himself in an odd difficulty. Although many people, most people indeed, will endorse the present conflict in conversation, and will be most articulate on the subject and most indignant with "negativistic" criticism, they show a strange reluctance to put their views down in cold print. Those who are in opposition to the present conflict, on the other hand, are not at all shy about appearing in print. The result has been that the casual reader of "Politics" might very well come to the conclusion that there is little if anything to be said in favor of *the war, from the standpoint of human progress.*

This, of course, would be a most unfortunate deduction, besides being deplorably negativistic. It is, therefore, with great satisfaction that we are able to present to our readers the remarkable document printed below, which puts in the most forceful and indeed uninhibited way the arguments in favor of the present armed crusade against, in the author's memorable phrase, "a GANG OF UNMITIGATED CROOKS AND INFIDELS." The hypercritical may deduce, from internal evidence, that the document is the creation of a superannuated Hearst editorial writer suffering from delirium tremens. They may even find it a strange mixture of the pathological and the corny. We would remind such irresponsible critics that the pamphlet is an official U. S. Army publication issued last year under the direct authority of Brigadier-General Arthur R. Wilson, U. S. A., to all troops of the Mediterranean Base Section. Its validity, furthermore, is unquestionable: we have a photostatic copy of the entire pamphlet in our possession. It is thus clearly impossible that the document should have the moral and stylistic qualities which it so clearly has.

HEADQUARTERS
MEDITERRANEAN BASE SECTION
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DIRECTION FROM *THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY*—THAT ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL SHALL BE THOROUGHLY INDOCTRINATED WITH THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE PRESENT WORLD WAR—THIS CHRONOLOGY WAS FIRST PREPARED BY CENTRAL DISTRICT, MEDITERRANEAN BASE SECTION. IT IS NOW PRINTED BY THIS HEADQUARTERS AS REQUIRED READING FOR ALL PERSONNEL OF THE M.B.S. AND AS A SUPPLEMENT TO ASSIST THE ORIENTATION COURSE IN CLARIFYING JUST «*WHAT THIS WAR IS ALL ABOUT.*»

ARTHUR R. WILSON
Brigadier General, U. S. A.
Commanding.

WHY AM I FIGHTING?

I. FOREWORD

Hundreds of thousands of us—yes, millions—have left our home circles . . . our mothers and fathers, our wives, sweethearts and friends. We have also given up our jobs, stepped OUT of civilian clothes and INTO one uniform or another of the American armed forces. The vast majority of us has done this willingly, without bellyaching,

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without even asking the question which, perhaps, has been uppermost in all our minds . . . the question: WHY AM I FIGHTING? The vast majority has acted in this unselfish, unquestioning way because, as TRUE AMERICANS, they have implicit FAITH in the sincerity of purpose behind their Country's CALL TO ARMS.

A very small minority has entered the services begrudgingly and, either because of a natural lack of understanding (which is forgiveable) or a refusal to SEEK understanding (which is tragic), has remained an unhappy group of men.

The serious fact exists, however, that all of us now in uniform are, directly or indirectly, taking part in the most far-flung and desperate scrap the world has ever known. Being in it, then, it is not sensible to suppose that any NORMAL individual among us wishes, by choice, to be on the LOSING SIDE.

AMERICA is keenly aware of the sacrifices—individual and collective—that a war such as this demands of its armed forces. For this reason AMERICA believes that each and every man now in uniform deserves a CLEAR picture of just WHY he was asked to make these sacrifices; deserves a SIMPLER ANSWER to that confusing, and often disturbing question: WHY AM I FIGHTING?

No attempt to philosophize (that is, to give fancy theories of why nations have fought throughout the ages) will be made. It is of little interest to us TODAY what caused other peoples, in other countries, to kill one another in the PAST. But it should be of considerable interest to us to try and figure out just why WE'RE fighting NOW; just why WE'VE left our homes, jobs and (in hundreds of thousands of cases) the happy security of AMERICAN shores to fight « A BUNCH OF FOREIGNERS ». If we can grasp an UNDERSTANDING of the causes which have driven us into this universal brawl it should help us, SPIRITUALLY and MENTALLY, toward a far speedier and more COMPLETE VICTORY.

Anyone of us will admit that if he actually SEES another man strike his mother, best girl, wife or defenseless friend, his PUNCH—in retaliation—will have much more STEAM behind it than if his knowledge of the assault be based solely upon vague suspicion. A man's EYE tells him what he SEES; then, mentally and physically, he acts according to his temperament. A man's UNDERSTANDING is the EYE of his SPIRIT. Without UNDERSTANDING the SPIRIT lags behind, and the man becomes half-hearted . . . often useless. Today, as never before, we need UNDERSTANDING and its « team-mate », SPIRIT.

Therefore, by way of providing us with more of an UNDERSTANDING as to WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT, the Government of our Country has collected together the following series of events—events based on FACT (NOT PROPAGANDA!)—which forced us, AS A NATION DETERMINED TO PRESERVE THE IDEALS OF ITS HERITAGE, to enter this terrible conflict.

If every man of us can just SEE more clearly WHY we're fighting, we will be better equipped to polish-off our enemies and return to our HOMES and JOBS feeling that we have not made these sacrifices for NOTHING.

HITLER ! HIROHITO ! MUSSOLINI ! These are the three FALSE « LEADERS » we can thank for awakening us to a national consciousness of the fact that AMERICA'S own interpretation of her « REASON FOR BEING » . . . LIFE LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS . . . is worth preserving AT ALL COSTS !

Under each « LEADER'S » name will be listed the HISTORICALLY RECORDED highlights along the road of his particular RISE TO INFAMY. When they are all stacked-up, and weighed on THE SCALES OF HUMAN JUSTICE, it is hoped that everyone of us now in the services will be a little MADDER and, therefore, fight a little HARDER so that we may return home a little SOONER . . . home to AMERICA, the ONLY major nation in the world that will not have suffered the diseased and humiliating imprint of the AXIS HEEL !

WHY ?

BECAUSE WE WILL HAVE *DESTROYED* THE TIDAL-WAVE OF AXIS POISON *BEFORE* (NOT AFTER !) IT REACHED OUR SHORES !

II. HIGHLIGHTS

A. ADOLPH HITLER:

1933: HITLER BECOMES CHANCELLOR OF THE GERMAN STATE.

He shouts: « I WILL MAKE GERMANY THE DOMINANT STATE IN THE WORLD ! » But the world laughs, calls him a «CLOWN ».

1934: Hitler tries, unsuccessfully, to GRAB Austria, an INDEPENDENT STATE. He fails because MUSSOLINI, not YET in his employ, supports the cause of Austrian independence.

1935: Hitler openly announces that he is building SUBMARINES; that Germany has reestablished MILITARY CONSCRIPTION; that the CIVIL air fleet has been transferred to MILITARY CONTROL; that, a year earlier, he had established the Nazi MOTOR CORPS. All these « acts » are in DIRECT VIOLATION OF THE TERMS OF THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES. Yet the world says nothing and stupidly believes Hitler when he yells: « THE NAZIS NEED A PROLONGED PERIOD OF *PEACE* TO CARRY THROUGH DOMESTIC REFORMS. *PEACE* IS ALL WE SEEK ! »

1936: THIS IS A GREAT YEAR FOR THE FUHRER !

a. He denounces (TEARS UP !) The Locarno Treaty of 1925 . . . a treaty which GUARANTEES the Eastern Frontiers of FRANCE and BELGIUM.

b. He brings GERMANY, ITALY and JAPAN together in the ANTI-COMINTERN (ANTI-SOVIET) PACT. Inspired by the Fuhrer's shouting, all three nations VOW TO SPIT on the ideas of Soviet Russia.

(*Editor's Note: We regret that lack of space compels us to omit eight pages at this point.*)

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h. 1.25 *P.M.* (*Eastern Standard Time*) *DEC.* 7, 1941: At the very moment — BY THE CLOCK — when the "HEAVEN-BORN" Emperor's envoy hands Mr. HULL a document saying: "THE JAPANESE *LOVE PEACE AND HAVE SOUGHT* IT CONSTANTLY!" the Fuhrer's "MOST HONORABLE" partner *ATTACKS PEARL HARBOR !!*

i. *A QUESTION:*
ARE WE A LITTLE MADDER?
YES!
ARE WE STILL THE *OSTRICH?* DO WE STILL SAY: *"IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE!"*
NO!
BY A DESPERATELY TRAGIC BUT, PERHAPS, A PROVIDENTIAL ERRING IN JUDGMENT, HITLER HAD PREVAILED UPON HIS SLIT-EYED ACCOMPLICE TO EMPLOY THE "TIME-HONORED" JAPANESE METHOD OF ATTACK. . . .
TO STAB IN THE BACK!

(*Editor's Note: We regret that space limitations again compel us to omit eight pages at this point.*)

"WHY AM I FIGHTING?" ISN'T IT, BY NOW, JUST ABOUT AS CLEAR AS *THE YELLOW STREAK IN A JAP?*

Vice-President WALLACE gives a pretty good answer to the question when he says:

"THIS IS A FIGHT BETWEEN A *FREE* WORLD AND A *SLAVE WORLD*"

The question may be answered in a score of ways.

FOR EXAMPLE, I AM FIGHTING BECAUSE . . .

1. "I want to make sure that a GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE *SHALL NOT* PERISH FROM THIS EARTH."
2. "I wish to PRESERVE THE RIGHT TO worship my OWN God; to speak my OWN mind; to have my OWN shadow follow me, or lead me, down a FREE street to a job of my OWN choosing!"
3. "I never wish to see 'THE GLEAM OF THE BEAST OF PREY' in *MY* child's eyes!"
4. "I prefer LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS to DEATH, SLAVERY, AND ABJECT MISERY."
5. "I didn't raise my boy to be a TOJO."
6. "I'd rather pay the TAXES than the AXIS."
7. "TIME and BRAVERY will lick CRIME and SLAVERY!"

And, lastly, why not a very simple one:

"I FIGHT FOR *RIGHT*!"

(*Editor's Note: We regret it is necessary to omit four pages at this point. It will be understood that our space is limited.*)

III. IN CONCLUSION

OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN-AND-WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES:

You have read the « RECORDS » of HITLER, HIROHITO and MUSSOLINI. They are as IRREFUTABLE as they are DIABOLIC for, in actual substance, they have been taken out of the VERY MOUTHS of the CRIMINALS themselves. Nothing has been exaggerated for the simple reason that FACT belies exaggeration. If anything, this chronology of the EVIL activities of the AXIS POWERS is an UNDER-ESTIMATION of the total « SCHEME » which their warped minds have conjured up for the MASS MURDER of FREE MEN throughout the CIVILIZED WORLD.

YOU and OUR ALLIES alone stand between these spiritually DISEASED DESPOTS and the fulfillment of their hideous schedule to ENSLAVE MANKIND.

Every OUTPOST, every SENTRY, every PATROL now stationed along the far-flung Frontiers Of Freedom . . . every COMBAT SOLDIER in every UNIT, from SQUAD to FIELD ARMY, must bear this ALL IMPORTANT fact CONSTANTLY in mind:

ONE MORE *DEAD* ENEMY IS ONE MORE NAIL IN THE COFFIN WHICH THE UNITED NATIONS ARE NOW FASHIONING FOR THE *LAST RITES* OF
NAZISM
FASCISM
and
JAPISM !

AND WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY THIS ?
BUT ONE THING:
FIGHT TO KILL !!

Yes, « KILL » is a HARSH word to a PEACELOVING people *NOT* AT WAR

But YOUR GOVERNMENT has implicit FAITH in the knowledge that when the GODGIVEN FREEDOMS of OUR NATION are basely challenged by a GANG OF UNMITIGATED CROOKS AND INFIDELS, the FIGHTING MEN, of an *AMERICA ENRAGED AND AT WAR, will STRIKE* with all the SPIRIT-OF-HATE NECESSARY *to KILL THE KILLER* . . .
to FOREVER EFFACE FROM THE EARTH THE THREAT TO
HUMAN DECENCY AND THE DIGNITY OF MANKIND

High up on the granite surface of Mt. Rushmore, in Dakota's Black Hills, the PEOPLE OF AMERICA have fashioned the roughhewn faces of WASHINGTON, JEFFERSON, LINCOLN and THEODORE ROOSEVELT. From their wind-swept shrine these four TRUE AMERICANS are looking down upon a WORLD AFLAME . . . are looking down on YOU, and YOU, and YOU to CARRY-ON their IDEALS, to continue guarding—JEALOUSLY and COVETOUSLY—all that the sacredly cherished term, AMERICAN FREEDOM, implies.

DESTINY selected THEM to shape YOUR hallowed FREEDOMS into being. DESTINY now selects YOU to PRESERVE and to PROTECT these same FREEDOMS; to pay with your LIFE, if necessary, so that YOUR children and their children's children shall ETERNALLY bask in the sunshine of *UNTHREATENED* LIFE, LIBERTY and HAPPINESS.

It is for TIME and HISTORY fully to record the story of this struggle. But today YOU are writing it . . . SHOT by SHOT, PLANE by PLANE, TANK by TANK, SHIP by SHIP—yes, and LIFE by LIFE ! The ink will be RED, by the grim necessity of SACRIFICE for PURPOSE. And not only are your FAMILIES watching you in PROUD THOUGHT, spiriting you to VICTORY with PRAYERS for your SAFETY . . . there's ANOTHER Being, far more OMNIPOTENT than all the combined forces of AXIS EVIL, Who STANDS BEHIND YOU—night and day—loading your soul with *His* confidence while you load your guns with AMMUNITION.

So include this VITAL THOUGHT in the EQUIPMENT of your MIND:

When you FIGHT — when you KILL — you are doing BOTH to preserve *His* FAITH in you !
AMERICA, as *He* knows her and WE love her,
RESTS IN *YOUR* HANDS !

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"WHY?"—Underside View

Now that we have given the official ideologues a chance to explain what the political aims of the American soldier *should be,* it might be instructive to try and see what they actually *are.* The first thing we discover is that they don't exist. The rank-and-file American soldier just doesn't seem to have *any* political convictions, pro or contra, about this war. He is fighting because the state conscripted him to do so, and because the vast majority of men will do what "the authorities" tell them to do unless there are powerful motives working the other way. Such motives don't at present exist, and so he fights.

It is a curious and perhaps significant fact that there is at once less political opposition to this war than there was to World War I, and at the same time less popular belief in its aims (or even interest in them).

The weakness of anti-war sentiment this time is suggested by the fact that the records of World War I show a total of 474,861 draft delinquents, while up to the middle of last year only 171,642 draft delinquencies had been reported. (E. E. Conroy, head of the New York F.B.I., quoted in *N. Y. Times,* June 25, 1943.) The contrast is even more striking when one considers that the World War I figure covers a period of only a year and a half, while the World War II figure covers almost three years of Selective Service. "Our young men have answered the call to service in a wholly commendable way," commented Assistant Attorney General Berge in a report issued on August 26, 1943. "Previous efforts to raise an army by conscription have been accompanied by some ugly incidents of mass evasion and 'draft riots'. In the last war, approximately 10,000 draft evaders were prosecuted during the first year alone. Now almost three years after enactment of the Selective Service Act, we have convicted only slightly more than 6,000."

If there is less opposition to the war than last time, there is even less positive belief in its aims. After making a tour of the African and European war theatres last year, during which he spoke to "hundreds of thousands" of American soldiers, the Rev. Dr. William B. Pugh, himself a chaplain in World War I and now chairman of the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains, summed up his impressions: "You could tell these boys' fathers twenty-five years ago that they were on a holy crusade, in a war to end war, or fighting to save democracy. Not so with the modern American soldier. He would almost laugh at me if I talked such rot."

I think the following generalizations can be made about the American soldier's attitude toward this war:

1. *He does not believe this is a war for any of the noble purposes his political leaders talk about.*

> "Of all the enlisted men I have met, I could count on my fingers and toes the men who have had any basic conviction about the war. . . . Personally, I think the root of the matter probably lies in the nature of the war itself."—A corporal, quoted by Hanson W. Baldwin in the *N. Y. Times* of March 2, 1944.

> "I have the definite impression that our men are very muddled on the whole—muddled as to whom they are fighting against and even less clear on what they are fighting for."—Rabbi Barnett R. Brickner, after completing a tour of the war theatres on a Presidential mission; as quoted in the *N. Y. Times* of Feb. 17, 1944.

2. *This scepticism about the war is wholly negative; it springs from no revolutionary or even progressive values. The soldier thinks of the war as entirely a power struggle which he naturally wants his country to win. But even this aim is not very real to him. His personal war aim: to go home.*

> "I have seen the American combat soldier fighting in Tunisia and Italy. . . . When he is asked why he is fighting, he usually has little to say. He doesn't know. All he wants is to finish service and get home as soon as possible."—A correspondent in *Time* for Dec. 20, 1943.

> When the *Stars and Stripes,* the army paper in the European theatre, printed an editorial last fall saying that the soldiers in Italy didn't want furloughs (as certain Congressmen had claimed) but wanted to see Berlin before they saw their home towns again, "an avalanche of sulphurous letters arrived". The *Times* summed up their content: "The average soldier regards the war against Germany as a job, not a crusade." And on a job, you want to work as short hours as possible. . . .

3. *The home to which the soldier yearns to return will be, he hopes, identical with the home he left; he wants as few changes as possible in the postwar world. There is, furthermore, a simpleminded materialism about these completely nonpolitical desires which often seems almost infantile.*

> "Several months ago some magazine printed replies by soldiers to the question, 'What are we fighting for? One was, 'It beats the hell out of me,' which, slightly bowdlerized, is the soldier's usual comment on the impenetrably mysterious way of the army and the world. Another was, 'To keep what we have.' I believe the second, in its blunt, unqualified conservatism, is one a majority of us would give. I am certain that it has been several months since I last heard the Four Freedoms mentioned, even ironically, and there is no evidence that any of our war aims propaganda has taken."—Sgt. Wicco, stationed in India, in *Common Sense* for July, 1944. (This magazine's regular "Soldiers' Forum", by the way, is a unique and valuable index of what the more articulate soldiers are thinking.)

> "I don't know exactly what democracy is, or the real commonsense meaning of a republic. But as we used to talk things over in China, we all used to agree that we were fighting for The American Girl. She to us was America, Democracy, Coca Colas, Hamburgers, Clean Places to Sleep, the American Way of Life."—Capt. Robert Scott in *God is My Co-Pilot.*

> Some answers in an essay contest, "Why I fight", as reported in the *N. Y. Times* of Dec. 5, 1943:

> A tank driver: "What I am fighting for is home . . ."

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A lieutenant in a bomber squadron: "I fight for weekends at the beach or the ball park, evening at home and the kids in my lap."

An engineer corporal: "I am fighting to get this damned war over and go home."

An army doctor: "I fight to keep America America."

(This last reply was said to summarize the general tendency of the replies.) *

4. *Compared to the troops of other countries, American soldiers, despite their higher educational level, appear provincial, ignorant, politically immature and lacking in intellectual curiosity.*

"Generally one encounters a lack of interest in the present or the future among young soldiers. Only a few read anything in the newspapers except the comic strips, the sports page and the gossip columns. Officers have often lamented to me the lack of current-events discussions like those in the British Army. . . . When a radio is available, jazz is the objective of every dial twister. . . . The result is a limited stock of ideas on the future of the world, and, as far as this correspondent can find, very little thinking about it. A pilot who had done as much as any man in the service to bring about the defeat of the German air force . . . said, 'Yeah, it's interesting to think about, all right,' and let it go at that. . . .

"Our army . . . is thus neither politically mature like the British Army nor politically fanatic like the Germans. . . . Even the British troops in the field find time to argue about the outlines of the postwar world. During the battles around Tebourba, I heard lengthy arguments among fighting men, five minutes from the firing line, on Russia's right to the Baltic states. . . . The most sincere and animated discussion about the future that I have heard in North Africa took place at a night-fighter station of the RAF. Every one from the wing commander to the rawest private took part in a two hour talk. . . . Our own pilots and crews have little interest in that type of discussion."—Drew Middleton in the *N. Y. Times Magazine* for May 2, 1943.

"One hundred and thirty Russians, onetime members of Loyalist Spain's International Brigade, were freed last week from an internment camp just outside Algiers. . . . The Russians gave a farewell party at their camp. *Time* correspondent Jack Belden, who attended, cabled this report:

"I asked one of the Russians who spoke English what he thought of the political situation in Algiers. 'We used to think it was very bad,' he said. 'Americans had come here mainly to do business. It is better now, but it could be improved a lot, especially the attitude of the Americans.'

"A minute later he said: 'You surprised me by asking that question.'

"I asked him why.

" 'Americans generally do not show any political interest at all,' he explained. 'When we came here we met American soldiers and were astounded by their ignorance. We have been shut up from the outside world for four years, but we knew more of what is going on in Europe than they did. Even the lowliest peasant knows more of what this war is about than the American soldiers we have met. The people in Europe seem to know what they are fighting for, and they are at least partially politically educated. The British soldiers we have met are not so far advanced in their thinking as the people on the Continent, but they have much greater understanding of the issues at stake than your soldiers.' He shrugged. 'Perhaps it is because you have always been such a rich country. . . .'

"I stayed around for a few Russian farewell songs, then started back by car to Algiers. In the car with me was a U. S. Air Forces colonel. Said he: 'I can't understand how a motley crew like that would go and get themselves mixed up in a crazy civil war in Spain.' "—*Time*, June 28, 1943.

ROME, Nov. 12: The same inability or unwillingness, or both, of the vast majority of American soldiers in North Africa to master even the rudiments of French is painfully noticeable here in their indifference to learning Italian though many have been in this country fourteen months. . . . As in Algeria, there are well-meaning instruction efforts by the Red Cross and other agencies. Even the sponsors, however, concede privately that these have little appeal. . . . The crux of the matter is not linguistic at all but psychological, and it is expressed in the attitude, 'Aw let 'em learn English.' This may be good for a laugh the first time you hear it, but after that it begins to symbolize a basic contempt and indifference of too many of our fighting men to anything 'foreign' around them. This despite the fact that international cooperation on a scale vaster than ever before proposed is now the very keystone of our national policy." — Milton Bracker in *N. Y. Times*, Nov. 13, 1944.

Here, then, is a most serious situation, from the point of view of those responsible for winning the war: an army whose soldiers don't believe in the official war aims, an army of provincials whose one great interest is simply to get the mess over with and go home. How can America play the world-imperialist role she must play after the war, under our present economic system, if her soldiers won't even learn foreign languages? A real problem for American imperialism.

* Although they want to return to the same kind of society *in general*, a large proportion of soldiers do not want to return to the same *specific* part of that society which they knew as civilians. A War Department survey conducted last spring in one of the Eastern "separation centers" revealed that 40% of the veterans then being discharged from the Army not only didn't want their old jobs back, they didn't even want to return to their home communities. A similar survey on the West Coast showed an even higher percentage. (*N. Y. Times*, June 3, 1944.) This is a most significant finding. It seems to indicate that, while "sold" on The American Way as an ideology, a big minority—almost a majority—of Americans still retain enough horse sense to realize that *their own specific experience* of The American Way has been unsatisfactory. The powerful apparatus of Popular Culture has successfully used schools, radio, movies, and the press to dope the average American into an acceptance of the myth of American democracy; but at least he can see through it in his individual case. Some day the conflict between his personal experience and his civic ideology may become sharp enough to intrude into his consciousness, and a "revolutionary situation" will result.

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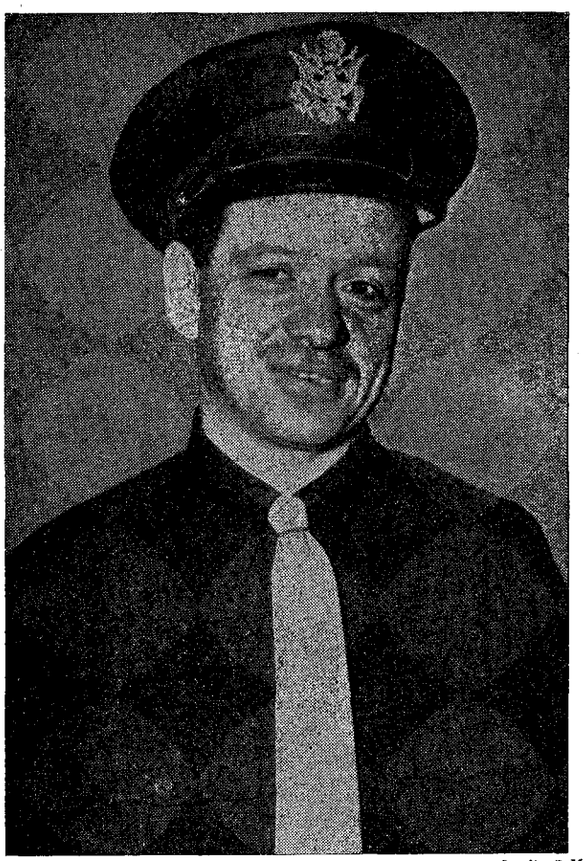
The liblabs, with their customary sense of duty, have taken this problem on their already overburdened shoulders. A typical reaction is expressed in a letter by a soldier in *The New Republic* of Sept. 27, 1943: "The ordinary American soldier does not hate his opponents as, for example, the Russians and the Chinese do. Such hatred is born only out of a keen sense of personal injury which Americans cannot feel. But a vicarious sense of injury can be engendered by the manipulation of symbols, and in this our propaganda, military and civilian alike, has failed."

This is a wonderful example of the unconscious cynicism into which the liblab is led by his essentially idealistic (as against materialist) approach to history. From a belief in the power of brave words and fine sentiments in themselves to change things, the liblab easily goes on to the notion that if propaganda—the "right kind" of propaganda, of course—is successful, if people can only somehow be induced to believe it sincerely, then the reality has also changed correspondingly. (Whereas the actual situation is rather that the more successful the propaganda the less necessary is it for any change to be made in the reality.)

A more naive example of the liblab approach to the problem is the observation, in a war dispatch in *PM* of May 21, 1944: "Army doctors insist that the education must start with the soldier, who should be told as effectively as possible about the whole war—the stakes involved, why we are fighting, and the whole background, which might be entitled: 'This Is Why You're In It.' They're sure that once he's told, he'll fight like hell to victory." It would seem that just the reverse is true: nothing would produce lower morale and more mental crackups than any such all-out "educational" attempt on the part of the military authorities. Imagine, for example, the effect on a soldier who sincerely tried to gain enlightenment from General Wilson's little pamphlet reproduced above.

Fortunately for the interests of American imperialism, however, such pamphlets are not taken very seriously either by the soldiers or by the high command. With their usual superior perspicacity in such matters, the reactionaries running the armed forces have firmly repelled the attempts of the liblabs to "educate" the troops. They have shrewdly depoliticalized the training program and have rebuffed the liblab spellbinders with their nonsense about democracy. They are right on two grounds: to the extent that such indoctrination should be successful, (1) it would tend to "unsettle" the minds of the troops, making them argumentative, opinionated, perhaps even stimulating them to apply democratic ideas inside the totalitarian military world they live in; (2) it would raise all kinds of awkward questions about the nature of the war itself, since one doesn't have to be a Karl Marx to see there are many serious discrepancies between *PM's* war and the actual war. The high command realizes, if the liblabs don't, that this is not a people's army and not a war for democracy, and they would just as soon not get into any arguments on the subject with the men they depend on to do the actual fighting and dying. In many ways, theirs is a more dignified attitude than that of the bellicose liblabs, just as the private who says he is fighting so that he can get it over with and go home is on a higher plane, morally and intellectually, than the liblab who mouths phrases about democratic ideals.

Comment



Credit P.M.

Max Lerner and the German People The German people have let Max Lerner down. There is no other way to put it—they have failed him and damn near busted his big progressive heart. It seems that Lerner, all dressed up in his War Correspondent's Uniform (see cut), was scooting along behind the advancing Ninth Army in his jeep when he came across a large group of German civilians. "It was a drizzly afternoon," he writes (*P.M.*, March 4), "and they were clustered under a cement shed open at one end. There was a woman with a several-weeks old baby, and there was an old man of 87. Most were men and women in their middle 40's and above, with a scattering of children. They were almost all farmers." They had been hiding in cellars for three days while American guns destroyed their village in the course of "the war that they themselves had brought on." (How "they themselves had brought it on" not specified.)

Descending from his jeep, Lerner asked them: Are You Guilty? He records no reply from the baby, but the others answered that they had never trusted or liked Hitler, that they had always considered the Nazis criminals, and that they were Catholics and hence opposed for religious rea-

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sons to Hitler's policies. Why then, asks Lerner with that implacable logic he shows when he is baiting some one who can't hit back, Why then, did you allow the Nazis to do these things? "With one accord they answered that they had yielded to force and to force alone." But this doesn't go down with Lerner; he points out to the shivering, bomb-dazed farmers that the people of France, Belgium, Poland, and Russia didn't yield to German force; so why did they?* This was a blockbuster: "They were silent." (Different interpretations might be put on this silence.) Even after this, some of these simple peasants apparently didn't understand the kind of animal they were dealing with (see cut); they had been accustomed, after all, to the civilized society of hogs. So they asked Lerner to put in a good word for their local police chief, who had used his official post (probably at the risk of his neck) "to shield them from the severity of the Nazi regime." We will omit Lerner's reaction to *that* one.

"I came away heartsick and discouraged," writes Lerner. "The crime of these people was cowardice and moral callousness rather than active criminality. . . . Nowhere did I find the moral strength to face the fact of guilt. Only protests that they were not responsible for what had happened." Even the baby apparently lacked a sense of responsibility for Hitler, which shows how deeply ingrained this moral callousness is in the German national character.

However, Lerner thinks there may be "better material among workers than among the farmers and middle-class." (You can't keep a *P.M.* editor discouraged for long.) "Indications in Aachen are that a substantial section of the workingclass is possibly salvageable." So—if I may apply logic to Lerner himself—since what discourages him about the Germans is that so many of them deny they were pro-Nazi, the moral superiority of the Aachen workers must reside in the fact that they admit they were not forced to back Hitler but did so of their own free will and are hence responsible for the Nazis' crimes. That the German workingclass was pro-Nazi thus becomes a source of satisfaction for Lerner. We may be pardoned for reacting to this novel information—hitherto unrecorded in studies of Nazi Germany—with less jubilation.

Enter Two Russian Generals But Lerner was able to report in the same issue of *P.M.* a happier experience, one that seems to have restored his faith in human nature. He devotes a full page to describing, with a fulness of detail reminiscent of Cholly Knickerbocker, the thrilling visit of TWO SOVIET MAJOR GENERALS to the Ninth Army. These personages were as warming to Lerner's big progressive heart as the German peasants were depressing. They were much better dressed, for one thing: "resplendent uniforms with long field coats of a rich purplish material, tight green trousers and long black boots, and gold stars glittered on their shoulder insignia." Also they were much more Important. Lerner delightedly reports the trivia of their visit: how a "military crisis" occurred when it was found that General Suslaporov's name was spelled with a "t" instead of a "p"; how one of them "showed a rich command of American slang"; how the other patted a wall map as he passed it (significance not explained). Finally, they were Soviet generals, people's generals, democratic generals, very inspiring generals altogether, generals on the Right Side, the People's Side, the Yalta Side. Yes, they were clearly Max Lerner's kind of people—the progressive, democratic and victorious people, not like those wretched German farmers with their shabby clothes and shell-wrecked homes and hungry faces and their callous and cowardly refusal to lick the boots of an accredited *P.M.* war correspondent.

*According to reliable sources, the above countries were all engaged in a war against Germany.

Is Thomas Mann a German? The same issue of *P.M.* reprints as an editorial an article from *Free World* by Thomas Mann. The 20th Century Goethe (pocket edition) pontificates about his fellow Germans (he doubts "the propriety of pity") and regales us with selections from his diaries for the years 1933 and 1934. The key passage:

"The lack of sense for evil that large masses of the German people have shown was and always will be criminal. The tremendous spree that this every thrill-greedy nation imbibed from the poisoned gin of nationalism ladled out by fools and liars must be paid for. [*Not much of a sentence, that, for a Goethe, even pocket-size.—DM*] It is impossible to demand of the abused nations of Europe that they shall draw a dividing line between 'Nazism' and the German people. If there is such a thing as Germany as a historical entity, then there is also such a thing as responsibility—quite independent of the precarious concept of *guilt.*"

Now Thomas Mann himself belongs to that "historical entity" called GERMANY, he uses the GERMAN language, he is a GERMAN. If we abandon "the precarious concept of guilt" and make an individual morally responsible for the deeds of the "historical entity" he gets himself born into, then I fail to see how Thomas Mann is not just as guilty as his fellow Germans trembling under Allied bombs and shells in the wreckage of their homes—those poor devils Mann has the bad taste and the inhumanity to judge in so Pharasaical a manner. If we abandon "the precarious concept of guilt", then Mann's position over here becomes precarious indeed. Is he or is he not a member of that "historical entity", Germany?

The Sergeant Saves Our Honor It would be sad if the above specimens represented the sum total of "our side's" thinking on the responsibility of the German people. But fortunately for the honor of the human race, there are many with contrary opinions. An especially dramatic instance is the Associated Press interview of March 8 with Sergeant Francis W. Mitchell, of New York City, who belonged to one of the first American units to enter Cologne. It has often been observed how much more brutal and bloodthirsty civilians are than those who do the actual fighting. Sergeant Mitchell's remarks bear this out. He tells how the Germans crawled out of their cellars and brought out beer, bread, jam and pretzels for the American troops. "They were mostly children and old people—just sort of helpless and glad they were not being killed. It's hard to keep that icy front when people act friendly; also we Americans used to have some respect for old folks." The order against fraternization with German civilians, added the Sergeant, works only when the M.P.'s are around. "We are supposed to hate people—to be very tough customers. But as soon as the fighting is over, it works just the other way—we begin to feel sorry for them. Non-fraternization works if somebody is there with a club, but right at the front where a soldier is risking death, you cannot scare him with a $65 fine."

It is a great thing to be able to see what is right under your nose.

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A Letter on Wallace

A Boston reader writes, apropos my "Wallace & the Labor Draft" in the February issue:

Sir:

Your reflections on the Wallace-Jones affair have coincided with some of my own thinking on the matter. I believe, however, that you could, very profitably, have carried your analysis farther, and ask you to consider the following propositions:

1. Roosevelt is far too astute a politician to write such a corny letter to Jones, unless he wished it published. Note that he praised Jones' work, thus failing to offend the Tories, and placed his basis of approving Wallace purely on patronage grounds, and not on an identity of outlook.

2. Quite properly, Roosevelt depended on the docility of Wallace to accept the buffeting—and on the all-too-evident eagerness of the 'liberals' to call the letter 'unfortunate'.

3. Being fully aware of the temper of Congress concerning both men, Roosevelt waited until Wallace's defeat appeared certain, and then issued a statement to the effect that he would sign a bill divorcing the lending agencies from the Department of Commerce. To all appearances, he came to Wallace's rescue in time to salvage just enough from the wreck.

4. The 'liberals' rejoice — Roosevelt having come through —, the Tories are content — having lost nothing while gaining a great deal of favorable publicity, and Henry Wallace may yet be Secretary of Commerce.

5. If Wallace gets the appointment, and I predict that FDR will support him to the hilt, consider the political situation. Jones, or another of his men, will be left in charge of the RFC and other lending agencies, Wallace will be in what is probably the most unimportant cabinet post in the administration—*and the 'liberals' will be firmly tied to the chariot.*

6. Roosevelt properly recognized the danger of leaving 'idealistic' Henry lying around loose, and being a potential rallying ground for the forces of discontent. His problem was one of getting Wallace effectively bound without changing the 'totalitarian anti-liberal' trend of his fourth term. From this point of view, it appears that he has succeeded.

I agree that the maneuver is far from completed as yet, and the causality is still obscure. Some hypotheses may be advanced, however: that Roosevelt is aborting all potential organized opposition so that his 'peace' can go through; or in addition, he is solidifying his party's position for the 1948 campaign; or, in addition, and incredible as it may seem, he is carefully preparing his own ground for 1948. We shall see.

Sincerely,

February 22, 1945. CHARLES BLOOMSTEIN

The Old Master in Action

The above seems to me a shrewd evaluation of Roosevelt's calculations in this ambiguous and quick-shifting affair. Mr. Bloomstein might also have pointed out that the Old Master outmaneuvered the conservatives as well as the liblabs. For, assuming as I think was the case he did *not* want Wallace to get the lending agencies (FLA) but did want him to get the less important Department of Commerce post, the straightforward course would have been to state, at the time he nominated Wallace, that he was separating the FLA from the Department of Commerce (as he could have done by executive order). This would have greatly increased Wallace's chances for getting the latter post. But it had two disadvantages: (1) it would have put the onus of barring Wallace from FLA on Roosevelt, which would have gone down badly with the liblabs; and (2) it would have made it easier for the conservatives to concentrate their fire against Wallace for the Commerce job.

By standing pat, Roosevelt got the conservatives to do his dirty work for him. Had they been shrewder, they would have realized that Wallace could most easily have been defeated if they met the issue squarely and insisted on voting for him as Jones' successor in both jobs. However, underestimating their own strength, they chose to play safe and introduced the George bill separating FLA from Commerce.

It soon became obvious that Wallace had no chance of confirmation unless FLA was removed from his jurisdiction, whereupon an amazing transposition took place. Roosevelt stated he would sign the George bill, and this move, which would have been denounced by the liblabs had he made it on his own initiative, now, as Bloomstein points out, appeared to them as a move to "rescue" Wallace (as, in fact, it was, tactically considered). The liblabs now pressed for a vote on the George bill, while the duped conservatives tried to reverse their strategy and to postpone a vote on it until after the vote on Wallace for *both* posts. They were unsuccessful, however, and the George bill was passed. After that, the Southern Democrats deserted the fight against Wallace and the Republicans could not generate much heat on the matter. On March 1, the Senate, after a "perfunctory" debate from which "all the bitterness had evaporated" confirmed Wallace, 56 to 32. Even his two main antagonists, George and Bailey, voted for him. The liblabs were pleased—true, Henry didn't get the really significant post, but you can't have everything, and this was a Step Forward, etc. The conservatives were appeased. Every one was happy, except Jesse Jones. The Old Master had once more shown he is the smartest and most unscrupulous political tactician to occupy the White House since Lincoln.

The Issue Is Still Unresolved

The significant economic issue—oldstyle v. state-planned capitalism—is still unresolved, despite all the maneuvers and fireworks (and this, too, is typically Rooseveltian). As Jones' successor in FLA, Roosevelt appointed a man who stands midway between Jones and Wallace in economic philosophy: Fred M. Vinson, formerly Director of Economic Stabilization. Vinson is the same type as Byrnes: a smooth, colorless administrator who carries out Roosevelt's orders and is of no significance otherwise. Unlike Jones and Wallace, he has no personal force, indeed no existence as an independent political personality; thus the fact that his personal views are conservative means just that and has little political significance. Jones represents finance capital, Wallace can mobilize organized labor and middleclass liberals behind him, but Vinson has no social base and is wholly a creature of the White House. His appointment, which was praised by both Wallace and Jones, thus simply refers the whole issue back to Roosevelt.

It thus appears that I exaggerated the principled significance of the Jones-Wallace affair in my comments in the February issue—at least so far as Roosevelt's immediate strategy is concerned. But this much of an advance towards a Permanent War Economy has been made: a powerful force for oldstyle capitalism has been removed from the Administration and replaced by an administrator who will not seriously oppose any further steps in a PWE direction. The upshot of the whole affair is that Roosevelt has adroitly gathered the strings of postwar economic policy into his

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own hands. This is a setback for the die-hard Jonesian capitalists, since Roosevelt has never allowed principles, whether "reactionary" or "progressive", to interfere with expediency. And that it will in future be expedient to advance towards PWE seems most probable.

WITH THE HEAVY THINKERS: Grafton Department

Every time an American publicist, regardless of his politics, raises, however obscurely, the warning that we may pull away from our allies, he hurts the chances for world organization. He hurts them because if it is possible to separate, then it is possible; if we can, we can.

But we can't. We are going to have to help solve Russia's problems and Britain's problems because these are our problems, too; because we sink or swim together. . . . Our threat of separation is unreal. It is unreal because the war is real. (Samuel Grafton in the "N. Y. Post", Jan. 16, 1945).

Yalta changes the world, and those who are left out by Yalta (or who choose to stay out) will find themselves members of a cheerless little society indeed, something like the brotherhood of the vanishing buffalo, or the grand lodge of the great auks.

This truth applies to individuals, no less than to nations, and not to be a part of Yalta, at least in spirit, is to be self-condemned to a lonely and irrelevant future. He who does not think at least approximately along the lines of the Yalta Declaration will find himself doing a strange sort of thinking indeed, wondrously special and private. . . .

The stand one takes on Yalta decides one's entire political future: whether one is to be a meaningful member of the great society, or a lone operator in a kind of void. (Ditto, Feb. 23, 1945.)

WITH THE HEAVY THINKERS: MacLeish Department

(1)

Archibald MacLeish, in his first speech as Assistant Secretary of State called for a wider and deeper flow of world news.

"This nation has believed from the beginning of its history in the right of the people to know," be told the United Nations Information Board. "It believes that if the people are informed, the decisions of the people will be wise. . . . It believes that if the peoples of the world are informed about each other, their decisions with relation to each other will be just decisions—which means in the actual relations of people that they will be decisions for the maintenance of peace. ("N. Y. Times", Jan. 5, 1945, p. 5)

(2)

Secretary of State Stettinius gave a definition of 'unconditional surrender' today. . . . It is a military matter, he said, explaining that the Germans can surrender to the supreme commanders on each front. . . . He would not say, however, whether there was a unified policy among the Allies as to the terms or conditions of surrender. (Same paper, same date, p. 2)

WITH THE HEAVY THINKERS: Dolivet Department

Now the meeting of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin is imminent. . . . Especially good news is that the general conference of the United Nations will meet in Washington this April.

We may not yet be absolutely agreed as to just where we are going, but we certainly are on our way. (Editorial by Louis Dolivet in "Free World", February 1945.)

Whether the concessions at Yalta and the amazing friendship which has grown up between the three biggest men in the world will result in a lasting peace or not, is no longer in their hands at this stage. It goes back to their people and to the people of all the United Nations. A war can be launched by leaders, but only people can maintain peace. (Ditto, in the March issue.)

IS THERE A PSYCHOANALYST IN THE HOUSE?

MEXICO CITY, Feb. 20—A secretary's error gave Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius Jr. a bad start at the airport here when he arrived at the end of his 26,000-mile air trip from Yalta and Moscow.

Reading a prepared statement to the Mexican and foreign press, Mr. Stettinius said: "The United States looks upon Mexico as a good neighbor, a strong upholder of democratic traditions in this hemisphere and a country we are proud to call our own."

At the words "our own" he gasped, but went on. A secretary went around and substituted the word "friend" for "own."

—"N. Y. Times", Feb. 21, 1945.

Detroit Letter: The Briggs Strike

Matthew Smith, national secretary of the Mechanics Educational Society of America, testifying on March 10 before the Senate War Investigating Committee, said that employers in the auto industry "hate unions and don't want them near the plant." And when you talk to UAW-CIO officials in the know they will tell you that the manufacturers in this city are out to get the unions and to this end they have even devised a formula. "The Motor City Formula" some call it. Lately the formula has been used by one company after another. The Chrysler Corporation used it when Dodge workers were fired for refusing to increase production on gear shaving from 108 to 184 gears a day. Graham-Paige used it when disciplinary layoffs were meted out to 300 workers for washing up before quitting time—a practice that had been established by agreement. The Aluminum and Brass Co. also used it by endlessly delaying action on 20 major grievances. And so did Gar Wood, by discharging employes for not working 10 hours a day instead of the customary 8 hours they had voted to maintain. Latest company to use the formula is Thompson Products, which fired 26 union members, including the president, vice-president and secretary, and suspended 133 others for "engaging in strike activity last summer." I can give you a picture of how this formula works by narrating the developments in the Briggs dispute.

On Tuesday, February 6, employes in Briggs Burr Room, receiving 97 cents to $1.02 an hour, were ordered by their foreman to do rework. Rework consists of working over the rough pieces stamped on presses, filing, hammering and shrinking them to specifications. This requires considerably higher skill than burring, and pays $1.17 an hour. A committeeman tells what happened:

"I got an emergency call from the chief steward of the Burr Room, and when I got there the foreman told me he was sending three people home for refusing to do rework. I got in touch with the shop committee and hurried to arrange a meeting with the plant management to negotiate the grievance. While this meeting was underway, the foreman sent home eleven more workers and the chief steward of the Burr Room. Plant management made no attempt whatever to negotiate the case with us, and when I asked the labor relations director, Mr. Taylor, if he would cooperate in trying to iron out the trouble, he ignored the question and left the room."

Now, Briggs workers are known throughout the UAW-CIO as the "Dead End Kids" because of their militancy. There is a reason for this. Prior to the union, the Briggs Manufacturing Co. was notorious for its frightful working conditions. "If poison fails, try Briggs," used to be a common saying in this city. The company fought viciously to keep out the union, and only by fighting back were the workers able to organize. And only by steady militant action has the local been able to survive.

So the company officials knew very well that they would precipitate a walkout by sending 15 workers home. For the rest of the week the Mack Ave. Plant was down, the workers returning to their jobs the following Monday on condition that the Regional War Labor Board send in an arbitrator to take charge of the dispute. Meanwhile came the second step of the formula. On Feb. 10 Dean Robinson, vice-president of Briggs, announced publicly that "the company intends to find and take action against the irresponsible individuals who ignore grievance procedure in

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contracts, who send union plant chairmen and stewards around to coerce and threaten employes into idleness . . ."

Eighteen days later the axe fell. Seven able and militant stewards and committeemen were summarily discharged for allegedly "causing 57 work stoppages resulting in loss of nearly a half a million man hours." Not a shred of evidence was adduced to support this fantastic charge.

Immediately the "Dead End Kids" went into action. They walked off their jobs and nearly 400 workers piled into cars and made straight for the International Union Headquarters, which they picketed with signs: "We Want Support From Our International!" "We Want An Administrator over the International!" Spokesmen for the pickets confronted some of the International officers, demanding that they back up the Briggs workers in their efforts to resist management's offensive. The International officials protested that they knew nothing about the trouble and asked for time to ascertain all the facts, promising to appear before a Local 212 meeting that evening.

At that evening's meeting the workers did two things: (1) Lustily booed International representatives who urged them to go back to work because ". . . unless the plant is in operation, we cannot process your grievances." (2) Voted unanimously to continue their strike until "the fired workers are unconditionally re-instated."

The following day the company unfolded the next stage of the formula. Eight more employes were fired, accused of fomenting strikes. Another membership meeting was held Sunday, March 4, and again the workers booed those who talked about going back to work, and voted to a man to stay out until all fired employes were returned to their jobs without qualifications. The next day the local officers were ordered by the Regional War Labor Board to appear at a show-cause hearing Wednesday afternoon. Upon returning from the RWLB hearing, the officers made the following statement:

> "On Wednesday, March 7, the officers of Local 212 met with the Regional War Labor Board. At this hearing it was established that the Briggs Manufacturing Co. brazenly violated War Labor Board procedure by firing eight employes while a walkout was in progress.
>
> "Out of the War Labor Board hearing came the directive that the eight workers discharged after the February 28 walkout be immediately reinstated on their jobs. Then, upon resumption of work by the Briggs employes, the case of the seven orginally discharged workers shall be taken up at the fifth stage of the grievance procedure.
>
> "On these terms the four top administrative officers of Local 212 pledged to the RWLB that they would endeavor to get the Briggs employes back to work."

At a mass meeting held Friday evening to decide the question of going back to work, it was soon apparent that the temper of the workers had undergone a change since the preceding meeting. Those who spoke first in favor of returning to work were booed—but only by a minority. Plainly Briggs workers felt that by themselves, without the support of the International and other local unions, they were putting up a futile fight.

Among those called upon to speak was Walter Reuther, vice-president of the UAW-CIO. "Now we're going to hear from the radical who stops all radicals," said a voice in the audience, as Reuther walked to the microphone. He performed a masterly job of telling the workers what they most wanted to hear. He was not booed, in fact he was listened to with rapt attention. He began by saying that he too was once a Briggs worker at a time "when you worked in Briggs only long enough to draw a pay and get out of that hellhole." He told of his fights on picket lines, the beatings and jailings he received. Step by step he won over the audience, eliciting their approval and applause.

Then he proceeded to tell them why they should go back to work. What chance had they to win? They had been wrong to begin with, for hadn't they violated the union constitution by engaging in a wildcat strike? Moreover, they were in a blind alley, and they simply had to turn back and get on the right road, for only then could the International help them. In addition to violating the union's constitution, they also violated the no-strike pledge —a pledge that was upheld by a two to one referendum vote of the entire UAW-CIO membership.

"Furthermore, by this strike you are playing right into the hands of the manufacturers, who are scheming to smash the union. I just returned from a hearing where George Romney, managing director of the Automotive Council for War Production accused the CIO of having cut productive efficiency by 25 percent. It is no accident that all these strikes are occurring at the very time when the Mead Committee is scheduled to hold its hearings.

"Provoking strikes is part of the manufacturers' plan to discredit and destroy the union. We have to fight back. This is why you have to go back to your jobs. To do so will in no sense be a defeat, but a strategic retreat. You cannot fight the entire Manufacturers Association and your International Union too. The employers do not fight that way—rather they unite and strike together. That's what we must do, but we cannot do so if you go in one direction and the rest of the union goes in another. Look at your problem from, not an emotional, but a common sense practical standpoint, and you know you can't win by being on the wrong track . . . "

Reuther spoke eloquently, forcibly, driving his points home with down-to-earth illustrations. When he finished he was loudly applauded. If perchance when the majority came to the meeting they had any misgivings about voting to return to work, Reuther definitely dispelled them. Several other speakers followed him, but the audience became increasingly restive. Their minds were made up and they wanted to get the business over and go home. When at last the chairman called for the question, the overwhelming majority voted in favor of going back to work Monday morning. Before adjourning the workers passed a resolution proposing a 50 cents assessment on local 212 members to pay the seven discharged workers until final disposition is made on their case. It remains to be seen if the company will succeed in keeping those seven militants out for good.

As they were leaving the meeting, two workers argued about the outcome of the vote. "That damned International softened us up and took us for a ride again," one complained.

"Nuts!" snapped the other. "You guys are always squawking about the International. Who elects the International? Who just recently voted to uphold the no-strike pledge—the pledge that is more responsible than anything else for the mess we are in? I don't like the part the International is playing any more than you do, but if you want to know what the International is like—look in the mirror! What I mean is that the top leadership of our union is a reflection of the rank and file. And you can't expect a better leadership until the rank and file learns the score—until they think and act on sound program and principles instead of personalities and peanut politics!"

DETROIT, MICH. FRANK MARQUART

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The Danger Was Within (2)

KRONSTADT

Victor Serge

DURING the night of February 28-29, I was awakened by a phone call. "The Whites have taken Kronstadt," an anxious voice told me. "We are fully mobilized." It was Ilya Ionov, Zinoviev's brother-in-law. This was an appalling piece of news. If true, it meant that Petrograd itself would soon be lost.

"What Whites? Where did they come from? I can't believe it!"

"A general by the name of Kozlovski—"

"But what about our sailors? What about the Soviet? The Cheka? The workers at the Arsenal?"

"I've told you all I know."

Zinoviev was in conference with the Revolutionary Council of the Army, so I rushed over to the headquarters of the Third District Committee. Everybody was looking pretty grim. "It's fantastic. But it's true." "Well," I said, "we must mobilize everyone able to walk. Immediately!" Someone replied, evasively: Yes, we must mobilize, but nothing could be done without instructions from the Petrograd Committee. Several comrades and I spent the rest of the night poring over a map of the Gulf of Finland. We got word that small-scale strikes were spreading through the suburbs. Whites in front of us, famine and strikes behind us! I left at dawn, and on my way out of the hotel I ran into one of the maids, quietly leaving the building with packages under her arm.

"Where to so early in the morning, grandmother? And with such a load?"

The old woman sighed:

"There's going to be trouble. You can feel it in the air. They will slit your throats, my poor boy, yours and the others' too. They'll steal everything that isn't nailed down, just as they did last time. So I'm packing off my belongings."

At intervals along the deserted streets there were little wall posters announcing the treacherous seizure of Kronstadt by the counter-revolutionary general Kozlovski and his accomplices, and summoning the workers to arms. But even before I reached the District Committee headquarters I ran into several comrades who had already turned out, mauser in hand, and they told me that the Kozlovski business was a contemptible lie: the Kronstadt sailors had mutinied, and what we were up against was a naval rebellion led by the Kronstadt Soviet. If anything, that was still more serious; and the worst of it was the paralyzing effect of the official lie upon us. For the party to lie to us this way was something new. "They had to do it because of the mood of the people," some of my acquaintances explained. But they were frightened too. The strike had become almost general. Nobody even knew whether the street-cars would run.

Later that day I had a talk with my friends in the French-speaking Communist group. (I remember that Marcel Body and Georges Hellfer were both present.) We decided not to take up arms—to fight neither against the hungry strikers nor against the exasperated sailors. In Vassili-Ostrov, in a street white with snow, I saw a crowd gather, most of it women. I watched it push its way slowly forward to mingle with the military-school cadets sent there to open up the approaches to the factories. Patiently, sadly, the crowd told the soldiers how hungry people were, called them brothers, asked them for help. The cadets pulled bread out of their knapsacks and divided it up. Meanwhile, the Mensheviks and the Left Social Revolutionaries were blamed for the strike.

Leaflets distributed in the suburbs put forward the demands of the Kronstadt Soviet. They added up to a program for renewing the revolution. In brief: new elections for the Soviets, with secret ballot; freedom of speech and freedom of press for all revolutionary groups and parties; liberty for the trade unions; liberation of all revolutionaries being held as political prisoners; no more official propaganda; no more requisitioning in the rural districts; freedom of employment for artisans; immediate withdrawal of the street patrols which were preventing free purchase of food supplies by the general public. The Kronstadt Soviet, the Kronstadt garrison, and the sailors of the First and Second Squadrons had rebelled to get that program accepted.

The Party Reflex: Lies and Threats

Little by little, the truth broke through the smoke screen laid down by the press, whose mendacity now knew no bounds. And that was *our* press, the press of *our* revolution, the first socialist press in history, therefore the first incorruptible, unbiased press in history. Even in the past, to be sure, it had now and then laid itself open, to some extent, to the charge of demagogy (of a warm, sincere kind, however), and had used violent language about its opponents. But in doing so it had stayed within the rules of the game, and had, in any case, acted understandably. Now, however, lying was its settled policy. The *Petrograd Pravda* informed its readers that Kouzmin, Commissar for the navy and the army, had been manhandled during his imprisonment at Kronstadt, and had narrowly escaped summary execution—on written orders from the counter-revolutionaries. I knew Kouzmin, an energetic, hard-working soldier, a teacher of military science, gray from tip to toe; his uniform, even his wrinkled face, were gray. He "escaped" from Kronstadt and turned up at Smolny. "It is hard to believe," I said to him, "that they intended to shoot you. Did you really see any such order?" He looked embarrassed, and did not answer for a moment. "Oh, one always exaggerates a bit. There was a threatening note." In short, he had let his tongue run away with him. That was the whole story. The Kronstadt rebels had spilled

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not a single drop of blood, had gone no further than to arrest a few Communist officials, all of whom had been well treated. (Most of the Communists, several hundred in all, had gone over to the rebels, which showed clearly enough how weak the party had become at its base.) Nevertheless, someone had cooked up this story about hairbreadth escapes from the firing squad!

Rumors played an ugly part in the whole business. With the official press carrying nothing but eulogies of the regime's successes, with the Cheka operating in the shadows, every moment brought its new, deadly rumor. Hard upon the news about the Petrograd strikes, word reached Kronstadt that the strikers were being arrested *en masse*, and that the troops were occupying the factories. That was untrue, or at least greatly exaggerated, although the Cheka, running true to form, had undoubtedly gone about making stupid arrests. (Most of these arrests were for short periods.) Hardly a day passed without my seeing Serge Zorin, the secretary of the Petrograd Committee. I knew, therefore, how many worries he had on his mind, and how determined he was not to adopt repressive measures against the workers. I also knew that, in his opinion, persuasion was the only weapon that would prove effective in a situation of this kind, and how, to back up his opinion, he was bringing in wagon-loads of foodstuffs. He told me, laughingly, that once he had found himself in a district where the Left Social Revolutionaries had popularized the slogan: "Long Live the Constituent Assembly!"—which, clearly, was another way of saying "Down with Bolshevism!" "I announced," he went on, "the arrival of several wagons full of food. In the twinkling of an eye it turned the situation upside down."

In any case, the Kronstadt uprising began as an act of solidarity with the Petrograd strikes, and as a result of rumors (about repressive measures) which were mostly without foundation.

Kalinin and Kouzmin, whose stupid blundering provoked the rebellion, were chiefly to blame. Kalinin, as chairman of the Republic's Executive, visited Kronstadt, and the garrison received him with music and shouts of welcome. But when the sailors stated their demands he called them traitors, accused them of thinking only of their own interests, and threatened merciless punishment. Kouzmin bellowed at them: the iron hand of the dictatorship of the proletariat would strike down all infractions of discipline, every act of treason! The two of them were booed and kicked out—and the damage was done. It was probably Kalinin who, back in Petrograd, invented "the White general, Kozlovski." From the very first, when it would have been easy to patch up the differences, the Bolshevik leaders chose to use the big stick. We were to learn later that the delegation sent from Kronstadt to explain the issues at stake to the Soviet and people of Petrograd had got no farther than a Cheka prison.

Some American Anarchists—Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, and a young man named Perkus, the secretary of the Russian Workers Union in the United States—had arrived a short time before. A scheme for mediation took shape in the course of some talks I had with them on several successive evenings. When I told some of the party comrades about it, they countered: "That won't do any good. We're bound by party discipline, and so are you." I protested: "One can get out of a party." Cool, unsmiling, they replied: "No Bolshevik deserts his party. And, anyway, where would you go? Ours is the only party—to put it mildly."

The Anarchist mediation group used to meet at the home of my father-in-law, Alexander Roussakov. Since the Anarchists had the ear of the Kronstadt Soviet, it had been decided that only Anarchists would take part in the negotiations, and that the American Anarchists alone would assume responsibility vis-à-vis the Soviet government; so I was not present. Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman had an interview with Zinoviev, who received them cordially, for they were still able to speak authoritatively in the name of a section of the international proletariat. Their mediation scheme, nevertheless, was a complete failure. As a sop, Zinoviev offered them every facility for seeing Russia from a private railway car. "Think it over and you will understand." Most of the Russian members of the mediation group were arrested. I was not—an indulgence which I owed to the good opinion that Zinoviev, Zorin and a few others had of me, and to my position as a militant in the French workers' movement.

Why I Supported the Bolsheviks

After much hesitation, my Communist friends and I finally sided with the party. It was a painful step to take, and this is why we did it: The Kronstadt sailors, we reasoned, were right. They had begun a new freedom-giving revolution which would lead to popular democracy. Certain Anarchists who had not outgrown the illusions of childhood gave it a name: the "Third Revolution." The country, by this time, was in bad shape. Production had come virtually to a stop. Reserves of all kinds had been used up, including even the reserves of nervous energy which sustain popular morale. The workers' *elite*, formed in the course of the struggles under the old regime, had literally been decimated. The party, its membership swollen by the influx of bandwagon riders, inspired little confidence. And there was nothing left of the other parties but tiny cadres, of doubtful ability. Some of them, to be sure, might in a few weeks' time have put on flesh, but only by admitting *en masse* the soured, the bitter, the exasperated—very different types from the 1917 enthusiasts of the young revolution. Soviet democracy had lost its vitality. It lacked leadership. It had no organizational basis. And it had no defenders, except among the hungry and desperate masses of the people.

The popular counter-revolution translated the demand for freely-elected Soviets into the slogan "Soviets without Communists!" If the Bolshevik dictatorship were to fall, we felt, the result would be chaos: peasant putsches, the massacre of the Communists, the return of the émigrés, and, finally, another dictatorship, of necessity anti-proletarian. The dispatches from Stockholm and Tallinn showed that the émigrés were thinking of the future in precisely these terms. (These dispatches, by the way, strengthened the determination of the leaders to put down the Kronstadt rebellion quickly, and without regard to the cost.) Our thinking about all this had, furthermore, a factual basis. We knew of fifty rallying-points for peasant insurrections in Euro-

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pean Russia alone. We knew that Antonov, the exponent of Revolutionary Socialism of the Right, was active in the area south of Moscow, and that he was preaching both the destruction of the Soviet regime and the reinstatement of the Constituent Assembly. He had at his command, in and around Tambov, a skillfully organized army made up of several tens of thousands of peasants, and he had negotiated with the Whites. (Tukachevsky liquidated this Vendée towards the middle of 1921.)

In these circumstances, the party should have beat a retreat by admitting that the existing economic set-up was indefensible. It should not, however, have given up power. "In spite of its faults, in spite of its abuses, in spite of everything," I wrote at the time, "the Bolshevik party, because of its size, its insight, its stability, is the organized force to which we must pin our faith. The Revolution has at its disposal no other weapon, and it is no longer capable of genuine renewal from within."

Comrade against Comrade

The Political Bureau finally made up its mind to enter into negotiations with Kronstadt, lay down an ultimatum, and, as a last resort, attack the fortress and the ice-bound battleships. As it turned out, no negotiations ever took place. But an ultimatum, couched in revolting language, appeared on the billboards over the signature of Lenin and Trotsky: "Surrender or be shot like rabbits!" Trotsky, limiting his activities to the Political Bureau, kept away from Petrograd.

Meanwhile the Cheka had declared war on the Menshevik Social-Democrats by publishing an outrageous official document accusing them of "conspiring with the enemy, planning to sabotage the railways," etc. The Bolshevik leaders themselves were embarrassed; they shrugged the charges aside: "More of the Cheka's ravings!" But they let the charges stand all the same, and promised only that there would be no arrests and that everything would come out all right. Even so, the Menshevik leaders Dan and Abramovitch were arrested (in Petrograd); and the Cheka (led at this time, as I remember, by a red-headed worker named Semionov, a hard, ignorant little man) wanted to have them shot—on the grounds that they had organized the strike, which was by now almost general (and at least 75% spontaneous). I had just had a run-in with Semionov over two students the Cheka had arbitrarily seized. I got word to Lenin through Gorky (who was also at that moment intervening to save the Menshevik leaders). Once Lenin had been informed, we knew our friends were out of danger.

Early in March, Red Army troops advanced across the ice against the Kronstadt fortress and fleet. The rebel artillery opened fire on the assailants. Infantrymen wearing long white parkas advanced in waves, and in some places the ice cracked under them. Here and there a huge block of ice would break loose and, turning slowly over, would carry its human cargo with it into the black depths of the water. And then, comrade against comrade, the shameful slaughter began. . . .

"We'll Be Our Own Thermidor"

Meanwhile, in Moscow, the Tenth Congress of the party, on Lenin's motion, had abolished the requisitioning system ("War Communism"), and put the NEP into effect. All the economic demands of Kronstadt had been met! The Congress had, at the same time, gone out of its way to heap abuse upon all the opposition groups. The Workers' Opposition, for instance, had been described as an "anarcho-syndicalist deviation with which the party cannot make terms", although it was not Anarchist in any sense, and had advocated nothing but trade-union management of production (which, incidentally, would have been a big step in the direction of workers' democracy). Finally, the Congress had drafted its members, many of whom belonged to opposition groups, for the battle against Kronstadt. The extreme Left-winger Dybenko, himself once a Kronstadt sailor, and the writer and soldier Bubnov, leader of the group in favor of "democratic centralization", went to do battle on the ice—against insurgents with whom, deep in their hearts, they had no quarrel. Tukachevsky was now preparing the final assault.

On one of these black days, Lenin said to a friend of mine (I use his exact words): "This is Thermidor. But we shall not let ourselves be guillotined. We'll be our own Thermidor."

The Oranienbaum incident is never mentioned; but in my opinion it brought the Kronstadt rebels within reach of a victory which they did not want—and might easily have resulted in the fall of Petrograd. Serge Zorin, the huge blond Viking who was secretary of the Petrograd Committee, noticed something peculiar about the orders being given by one of the infantry commanders. For instance, certain arbitrarily chosen cadets were kept standing guard close to the artillery emplacements, and regroupings were being effected for which there was no evident reason. After a couple of days there was no longer any doubt that a conspiracy was afoot. As an act of solidarity with Kronstadt, an entire regiment was going to switch sides and call upon the army to rebel. Zorin immediately ordered into the regiment men who could be counted on, doubled the number of sentry posts and the complement of soldiers assigned to each, and arrested the regiment's commanding officer, a man who had spent many years as an officer in the Imperial Army. He was brutally frank: "For years I had looked forward to that hour. I hate you, you murderers of Russia. Now I've lost, life means nothing to me." Along with a considerable number of his accomplices, he was shot. His regiment, by the way, had been withdrawn from the front in Poland.

The Cheka Takes Over

The rebellion had to be liquidated before the thaw. The final assault was launched by Tukachevsky on March 17 and resulted in an audaciously-won victory. The Kronstadt sailors, fighting without competent officers (one of their number, to be sure, was an ex-officer named Kozlovski, but he played an unimportant role, and had no authority), made poor use of their artillery. Some escaped to Finland; some fought a savage defensive battle, from fort to fort and street to street, and died shouting, "Long live the world revolution!" Some even died with the cry: "Long live the Communist International!" Several hundred were taken into Petrograd and turned over to the Cheka, which months later—criminally, stupidly—was still

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shooting little groups of them. These prisoners belonged body and soul to the revolution; they had given expression to the sufferings and will of the Russian people; and there was the NEP to show that they had been right! Furthermore, they had been taken prisoner in a civil war, and by a government which for a long while had been promising an amnesty to those of its adversaries who were willing to become its supporters. Dzerjinski presided over this endless massacre—or at least let it happen.

The Kronstadt leaders, men unknown up to the uprising, were drawn from the ranks. One of them, Petrichenko, escaped to Finland and may still be alive. Another, Perepelkin, turned up later among some friends I used to visit at the old prison in Shpalnernaya Street—through which so many revolutionaries, Lenin and Trotsky among others, had passed in days gone by. From the depths of his cell, before disappearing finally from sight, Perepelkin told us the whole story of Kronstadt.

That dismal March 18! The morning papers had big headlines in honor of the proletarian anniversary of the Paris Commune. And each time the cannon fired on Kronstadt, the window-panes rattled in their frames. In the offices at Smolny, everyone felt uneasy. Conversation was avoided, except between close friends and even they spoke sharply to one another. The vast Neva landscape had never before seemed to me so bleak and desolate. (By a remarkable coincidence, there was a Communist uprising in Berlin on that same March 18, one whose defeat marked a turning-point in the strategy of the International, from the offensive to the defensive.)

The Great Ideas Die

Kronstadt inaugurated a period of doubt and dismay inside the party. In Moscow, a Bolshevik named Peniuchkin, who had distinguished himself during the Civil War, pointedly resigned from the party to found a new political movement — to be called, if I remember correctly, the Soviet Party. He set up his party headquarters in a street lined with workers' homes, and for a while nothing was done about it. Then he was arrested. Several comrades came to me and asked me to intervene on behalf of his wife and child, who had been evicted from their home and were sleeping in a hall somewhere. I was unable to do anything for them. The worker Miasnikov, another Old Bolshevik—he had taken part in the revolt in the Upper Volga in 1905, and there was a close personal tie between him and Lenin—spoke out in favor of freedom of the press "for everybody, from the Anarchists at one extreme to the Monarchists at the other." After a sharp exchange of letters he broke with Lenin, and before long he was deported to Erivan, in Armenia. From there he went to Turkey. I was to run into him in Paris some twenty years later. The "Workers' Opposition" seemed to be headed towards a definite break with the party.

As a matter of fact, we were already well on the way towards being overwhelmed by a nascent totalitarianism. The word "totalitarianism" itself had not yet come into existence; but the thing it stands for was ruthlessly making itself our master without our knowing it. I belonged to the ridiculously small minority which did know. But the majority, both of the party's leaders and of its militants, had come to regard "War Communism" as a merely temporary economic adjustment analagous to the highly centralized productive arrangements which Germany, France and England had worked out during the war. These centralization schemes had been called "War Capitalism". So the majority believed that once peace was restored the state of siege would automatically dissolve, and that we would then get back to some kind of Soviet democracy — what kind it was no longer possible to say.

The great ideas of 1917, the ideas which had enabled the Bolshevik party to sweep along with it the peasant masses, the army, the working class, and the Marxist intelligentsia, were certainly dead. Had not Lenin, in 1917, argued in favor of a Soviet press so free that any group able to muster 10,000 supporters would be allowed to publish its own newspaper, and at public expense? Had he not written that the transfer of power from one party to another within the Soviets could be accomplished peacefully, without sharp conflicts? Had he not held out, in his theory of the Soviet State, the promise of a form of political organization entirely different from the old bourgeois States, with "no functionaries and no policemen, apart from the people themselves"?—a State in which the workers would exercise power directly through their elected Soviets, and would maintain order through their own militia system? What with the monopoly of power, the Cheka, and the Red Army, all that was left of this dream of a "State-Commune" was a myth, of interest only to theologians. War, measures of internal defense against counter-revolution, and famine (leading to the creation of a bureaucratic machine to take care of rationing) had put an end to Soviet democracy. How and when would it be reborn? The party nourished itself precisely on the belief that the slightest relaxation of its grip on power would give the reaction the opportunity it was waiting for.

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Marxism's Totalitarian Potential

In addition to these historical factors, there were important psychological factors. Marxism has meant different things in different periods. The child of bourgeois science and philosophy on the one hand and the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat on the other, it makes its appearance at a time when capitalism is entering upon its decline. It puts itself forward as the natural heir of the society which gave birth to it. Just as capitalist-industrialist society tends to draw the entire world into its orbit, and to bring each and every aspect of life into conformity with its values, so the Marxism of the beginning of the twentieth century seeks to remake everything, transform everything—the system of property holding, the way production is organized, the map of the world (abolition of frontiers), even man's inner life (displacement of religion). Since its objective was a total transformation, it was, etymologically speaking, totalitarian. It included within itself both aspects of the society that was coming into being: the democratic and the authoritarian. The Germany Social Democratic party, largest of the Marxist parties through the period 1880-1920, adopted a bureaucratic form of organization modelled upon the State itself. It devoted itself to the conquest of power within the bourgeois State, and wound up thinking in terms of State Socialism.

Bolshevik thought takes it for granted that truth is its peculiar possession. To Lenin, to Bukharin, to Trotsky, to Preobrajensky, to many another thinker I could mention, the materialist dialectic of Marx and Engels was at one and the same time *the* law of human thought and *the* law of the natural development of societies. The party, quite simply, is the custodian of truth; any idea at variance with party doctrine is either pernicious error or backsliding. Here, then, is the intellectual source of the party's intolerance. Because of its unshakeable conviction of its exalted mission, it develops astonishing reserves of moral energy —and a theological turn of mind which easily becomes inquisitorial. Lenin's "proletarian Jacobinism", with its disinterestedness, its discipline in both thought and action, was grafted upon the psychology of cadres whose character has been formed under the old regime—that is to say, in the course of a struggle against despotism. It seems to be unquestionable that Lenin chose as his co-workers men whose temperament was authoritarian. The final triumph of the revolution eased the inferiority complex of the masses—the always bullied and always downtrodden masses. At the same time, however, it awakened in them a desire for retaliation; and this desire tended to make the new institutions despotic also. I have seen with my own eyes how a man who only yesterday was a worker or sailor gets drunk on the exercise of power—how he delights in reminding others that from now on he's giving the orders.

"The Danger Was Within"

These same considerations explain some of the contradictions with which the leaders themselves (despite the verbal and sometimes demagogic solutions which the dialectic enables them to put forward) have wrestled in vain. On a hundred different occasions Lenin paid democracy high praise, and insisted that the dictatorship of the proletariat is both a dictatorship "against the expropriated expropriators" and "the broadest workers' democracy." He believed it, wanted it to be true. He went into the factories to give an account of his stewardship. He wanted to face all-out criticism from the workers. . . . But he wrote in 1918 that the dictatorship of the proletariat was by no means incompatible with personal power, and by doing so justified in advance some kind of Bonapartism. When his old friend and co-worker Bogdanov came forward with embarrassing objections, Lenin had him locked up. He outlawed the Mensheviks on the grounds that they were "petit bourgeois" socialists who made themselves nuisances by always being wrong. He welcomed the Anarchist spokesman Makhno, and tried to convince him of the validity of Marxist doctrine; nevertheless, Anarchism was outlawed too—if not on Lenin's initiative at least with his consent. He ordered a hands-off policy towards the churches, and promised believers a truce; but he kept on saying that "religion is the opium of the people". We were advancing towards a classless society, a society of free men; but the party never missed an opportunity to remind people that "the reign of the workers will never end". Over whom were the workers to reign then? And that word "reign"— what does it mean, anyhow? Totalitarianism—and within ourselves!

(Translated from the French. The above is the second part of Chapter IV of Serge's as yet unpublished memoirs. The first part was printed last month. The concluding part will appear next month.)

DEPARTMENT OF UTTER CONFUSION

Reuter's dispatch from Lisbon, Portugal, Jan. 19:

"The banning of the writings of J. J. Rousseau, Francois Marie Voltaire, Frederick Nietzsche, Leon Trotsky and Maxim Gorky was demanded by the Portugese clerical paper, 'Novidades', today, in an article declaring that Stalinism 'is every day infiltrating into Portugese ideas and customs.' "

WITH THE MARXICOLOGISTS: DEPARTMENT OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Workers Democracy under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is exercised through the organs of the state, the trade unions, and democratic centralism within the Marxian Party, including the right of all factions within the Party at all times, within the framework of Democratic centralism. Those parties which after the establishment of the Workers State do not accept basic principles must be suppressed. However, certain parties, groups or factions which in the first period of the Workers State accept its foundation principles will continue to exist with full freedom of expression within the bounds of the new society until they are by a natural process merged with the Marxist Party, or until their policies drive them into fundamental opposition with the new society, at which point they must be suppressed.

—From "The 14 Point Program of the Provisional International Contact Commission for the New Communist (4th) International", as published in "International News" for February, 1945.

THERE'S JUST NO SATISFYING SOME PEOPLE

Dwight Macdonald, who is significant only because he is the most intelligent voice of the extreme left . . . complains in the February "Politics" about the censorship in Greece during the civil war. What one might expect from an honest revolutionist is that he would compare Greece to the vast areas liberated by the Red Army. . . . The Russian censorship is tight and efficient.

—Liston Oak in "The New Leader", March 10, 1945.

Considering this censorship, unparalleled in this war except in Russia and Germany. . . .

—Dwight Macdonald on Greece in "Politics", February 1945.

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Notes for a Political Dictionary

Axis: see *Alliance.*
Alliance: see *Axis.*
Deemed: necessary. Especially when it isn't. Usually "for the furtherance" of something. (See *Furtherance*)
Furtherance: commemoration of something that has ceased to exist.
Justice: shall prevail. As: "that ——— shall prevail." Phrase used after Pie a la Mode at official dinners.
Reference: usually found between "with" and "to" in official reports. The ancient Romans, a lazy people, were horrified by it; whence the phrase, "horresco reference."
Rape: usually "of Poland." Pre-1944 term for "liberation." Modern usage is exemplified in the motto of the Lublin Government: "When rape becomes inevitable, just relax and enjoy it." Also connected with Sex. In this sense, a secret movement with millions of adherents, who follow the exploits of their leaders in the afternoon papers. *Rape*-fruit: child of sin. The *Rapes* of Grath: famous novel.
Global: term in the philosophy of Henry Wallace, used to describe his constant sense of elation. No matter where he lands, he is always On Top of the World (definition of *Globe:* "locus of all the points equidistant from the center"). And from there he can always say: "From the heights of these lofty ideals . . ."
Globalize: Useful device for volatilization of hot potatoes. Whenever any one asks for something small and hence dangerously feasible, don't touch it and don't crush it: blow into it, *globalize* it by calling an International Conference. The advantage of International Conferences is that they deal with such Vast and Complicated Problems that no-one expects them to settle anything; it is hard enough for them simply to *be*, without having to *do* as well. This system was invented by the Popes: "Peace on Earth to all Men of Good Will. And Justice and Clouds."
Unknown: usually a soldier. Never a civilian. If a civilian were unknown, he would know better than to become an unknown soldier. (See: *Anonymity*) The "U.S." on American uniforms does not stand for "Unknown Soldier" nor even for "Unknowing Soldier." It means "United States", that is, the uniting of millions of States (of submission, of bewilderment, of utter confusion, of irritation, etc.) into One Army. The Communists call this "National Unity."
Anonymity: a fundamental Right of Man, recognized today, however, only for the dead. (See: *Unknown Soldier*)
Crime: small-scale war. (Doesn't pay.)

NICCOLO TUCCI

Just received from England:—

WORKERS IN STALIN'S RUSSIA

by M. L. Berneri

88 pages of data on trade unions, living conditions, Stakhonivism, forced labor, women's rights, etc. Indexed. A Freedom Press pamphlet. Price: 40c. Order from "Politics", 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N. Y.

Popular Culture

Field Notes

Adultized Children v. Infantile Adults

In "A Theory of Popular Culture" (POLITICS, February, 1944), I showed how Popular Culture tends to infiltrate into and ultimately absorb "high", or "serious", culture. But age lines as well as cultural lines are blurred. It would be interesting to know how many of the ten million comic books sold every month are read by adults.* We do know that comics are the favorite reading matter of men in the armed forces, and that movie Westerns and radio programs like "The Lone Ranger" and "Captain Midnight" are by no means only enjoyed by children. On the other hand, children have access to such grown-up media as the movies and radio. (Note that these newer arts are the ones accessible to kids because of the extremely modest demands they make on the audience's cultural equipment; so we find there are children's books but no children's movies.) This merging of the child and grown-up audience means (1) infantile regression of the latter unable to cope with the complexities of modern society, (2) "overstimulation" of the former, who grow up too fast. Progressive educators warn against allowing children under eight to go regularly to the movies but how many kids are progressively educated? ("Development has ceased to exist," writes Max Horkheimer somewhere. "The child is grown up as soon as he can walk, and the grown-up in principle always remains the same.")

Division of Labor

The whole field could be approached from the standpoint of the division of labor. The more advanced technologically, the greater the division. In Hollywood, a composer is not *permitted* to make his own orchestrations. An article in *Time* (Jan. 23, 1939) on Blackett-Semple-Hummert, the great radio script factory, suggests how far division of labor can be pushed. In magazines, the "editorial formula" reduces the individual article to part of a whole. The Lucepapers have carried this to an extreme: their writers do not even sign their work, which indeed is not properly theirs, since the gathering of data is done by a specialized, 100% female research corps, and the final article is often more the result of the editor's suggestions, rearrangements, bluepencilling, and rewriting than of the writer's efforts.

Such art workers are as alienated from their brain-work as the industrial worker is from his hand-work. The results are, of course, as qualitatively bad in art as they are quantitatively impressive in industry. The only great films ever to come out of Hollywood, for example, were made between 1915 and 1925, before financial control and technological elephantiasis had reduced the director to one of

*A "Survey of Comic Magazines in Hudson, N. Y." recently made by Paul W. Stewart & Associates showed, on the basis of personal interviews with every other family in the town, that 39% of the adults from 18 up read comic books. A correlation was also found, as one might expect, between the economic status of families and the degree to which they read comic books: only 7% of the high-income adults read comics, as again 31% of the middle and 53% of the low-income group.

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a number of technicians all operating at about the same level of authority. Griffith and Stroheim, the only great American directors, were artists, not specialists; they did everything themselves, dominated everything, from the scenario to the actors and, above all, the cutting. After all, only an artist can make a work of art; a production-line of specialists, no matter how competent, can't do it; there must be the single conscious brain and sensibility in command. In the movies, this brain must be the director's; this can be demonstrated theoretically and historically (what movie has achieved the first rank because of its scenario, or its acting, or its camera work?). Griffith and Stroheim were both terrific egotists—crude, naive, and not without charlatanry—who were able to survive a while partly because of the vigor of their personalities and partly because the industry was not highly enough organized to resist them. By the mid-twenties, both were outside looking in; the manufacture of commodities as costly and profitable as movies was too serious a matter to be entrusted to artists.

Mythology

A lady saw the movie actor, Lewis Stone, drink a highball in a restaurant. She went up to his table and said indignantly: "Aren't you ashamed, Judge Hardy, drinking in public! What an example!"

In 1931, when Amos 'n Andy were at the height of their popularity, the newspapers carried daily stories on the progress of Amos' trial for murder. According to *Time* (Jan. 25, 1943): "Albert Lasker, then Lord & Thomas advertising head, finally had to phone the pair to 'get Amos out of that spot fast'. The awful nationwide suspense was beginning to tell. The strain had become too great for thousands of parents and teacher groups."

Social History

Very little seems to have been done on a partieularly interesting aspect of our Popular Culture: its historical evolution. A survey of its forms since the Civil War, for example, needs to be undertaken. This should include all fields: Elbert Hubbard, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Brann the Iconoclast, the Frank Merriwell books, *East Lynne*, "There'll Be Pie in the Sky", the bunny hug and the cake walk. It would be a fascinating occupation to trace how in different periods different forms of kitsch arise to perform the same function, how, for example, the mass-woman gets her emotionalism in the nineteenth century via the paperbacked novel, later on by ten-twenty-thirty melodramas, in the twenties by magazines like *True Story*, and more recently by the radio soap opera. Can the decline of *True Story* in the thirties be correlated to the rise of soap opera?

Speaking of soap opera—this medium has been well analyzed from a psychological standpoint in Herta Herzog's "On Borrowed Experience", a study based on interviews with 100 habitual women listeners (*Studies in Philosophy & Social Science*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 1941). But I have seen no account of this form's history. It is surely more than a coincidence that the first soap opera, the Hummerts' "Just Plain Bill", went on the air in 1932, the worst depression year. For as Herzog shows, soap opera consoles housewives for their own unhappiness by describing the terrible problems other women have—"the union of sufferers". And is it a coincidence that the soap opera has been falling off in popularity since the war began? It has been suggested they are no longer in tune with the wartime mood. But why not? This would seem to be one more indication of what the war so far has meant to the American masses: not tragedy (which would call for more consolatory kitsch than ever) but rather full employment and economic security.

Whatever Became of Addison Sims?

The kind of question which it might be fruitful to answer is: why was self-education so much more popular several generations ago than it seems to be now? Pelmanism, Chatauqua, the Harvard Classics ("Fifteen Minutes a Day"), the International Correspondence Schools, the Roth Memory Course ("Why *of course* I remember you—Mr. Addison Sims of Seattle!"), Cooper Union—these have become innocent archaicisms. At the turn of the century, book agents roamed the country ringing doorbells and selling sets of "standard authors" (Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot) encyclopedias and multi-volume historical works. The book agent has vanished; people read for amusement, not instruction, and authors are no longer "standard" or sold in sets. Does all this perhaps show the growth of a popular instinct that education is not the golden key to progress which the Victorians thought it was? Is the myth of the self-made man fading? Is the modern world at once so irrational and so totally organized that the mass-man simply gives up, no longer hoping to understand or "improve" his situation?

A study of self-education in the last fifty years might be a good way to answer such questions—as Orwell in his "Ethics of the Detective Story" (POLITICS, November 1944) was able to trace in *that* field the deterioration of ethical standards during the same period. I can't help feeling that American critics might more profitably concern themselves with such rich and relatively unexplored areas than with trying to find something new to say about Henry James.

Lowenthal's "Idols of Consumption"

After I had written the above, a friend put me on to Leo Lowenthal's excellent study, "Biographies in Popular Magazines", which is printed in *Radio Research*, 1942-3 (Paul F. Lazarsfeld, ed.). Lowenthal is on the staff of that Institute for Social Research attached to Columbia University to which Herta Herzog and Max Horkheimer also belong and which has published a great deal of interesting material on Popular Culture. His study is a comparison of the biographical features in *Colliers* and *The Saturday Evening Post* for 1901 and for 1940-1. (It shows that content analysis *can* be fruitful, if done with some imagination and not in the *Fortune* manner.) He finds that in the forty-year interval there has been a great shift in the vocations of the subjects of these biographical sketches: business and professional men and political leaders have decreased in frequency, while entertainers have increased by no less than 50%. Furthermore, the 1901 entertainers are mostly serious artists—opera singers, sculptors, pianists, etc.—while those of 1941 are entirely composed of movie stars, baseball players, and such; and even the "serious" heroes in 1941 aren't so very serious after all: the businessmen and politicians are freaks, oddities, not the really significant leaders, as in 1901. The 1901 *Satevepost* biographers' heroes he calls "idols of production", those of today "idols of consumption."

Of the latter he writes: "They seem to lead to a dream world of the masses who no longer are capable or willing to conceive of biographies primarily as a means of orientation and education. . . . The vocational set-up of the dramatis personae is organized as if the social production process were either completely exterminated or . . . needed no further interpretation. Instead, the leisure-time period seems to be the new social riddle on which extensive read-

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ing and studying has to be done. . . . He [the American of today, as reflected in his 'idols of consumption'] appears no longer as a center of outwardly directed energies and actions . . . on whose work and efficiency might depend . . . mankind's progress. Instead of the 'givers' we are faced with the 'takers'. . . . They seem to stand for a phantasmagoria of world-wide social security; for an attitude which asks for no more than to be served with the things needed for reproduction and recreation; for an attitude which has lost every primary interest in how to invent, shape or apply the tools leading to such purposes of mass satisfaction."

The analogy with the "bread and circuses" stage of the Roman proletariat hardly needs stressing. As I pointed out last month, American capitalism, using the techniques of social planning and the "totalitarian-liberal" approach symbolized by Henry Wallace, can provide and will provide bread for its plebs in the interval between World Wars II and III; the circuses will continue to be provided by the "idols of consumption." The psychological attitude on the part of the masses that Lowenthal deduces from his study ("a phantasmagoria of world-wide social security") will certainly offer little resistance to the Permanent War Economy.

Lowenthal makes another capital point, which ties in with the decline of self-education noted above. The modern *Satevepost* hero is invariably presented as successful not because of his own personal abilities so much as because he "got the breaks." The whole competitive struggle is presented as a kind of lottery in which a few individuals, no more talented or energetic than any one else, drew the lucky tickets. The effect on the reader is at once consoling (it might have been me) and deadening to individual effort and ambition (there are no rules, so it makes no difference what one does).

"Success," writes Lowenthal, "has lost its seductive charm which once seemed to be a promise and a prize for everybody who was strong, clever, flexible, sober enough to try. . . . The success of our heroes of consumption is in itself goods of consumption. It does not serve as an instigator for more activity, it is introduced as something we have to accept just like the food and drink and parties; it is nourishment for curiosity and entertainment. . . . There is no longer a social pattern for the way up. Success has become an accidental and irrational event."

One more observation: note how closely the evolution of Popular Culture here parallels the nation's economic development. Lowenthal observes that the "idols of production" maintained their dominance in popular biography through the twenties. The turning-point came with the 1929 depression, just as it did in the economic field, where the problem of how to consume the goods which American capitalism had learned so well how to produce became the key question. The financing of consumption by the State is the heart of modern capitalist theory (and practice), and the consumer, not the producer, is the "economic man" who now occupies the center of the stage.

Letter (Unanswered) to the General Manager of Loew's Theatres, 1540 Broadway, New York City

Dear Sir:

National Velvet was shown at your Commodore Theatre (and doubtless at many other Loew's Theatres) last weekend. This is a film especially appealing to children; since *Lassie, Come Home,* nothing more definitely a picture for children has come out of Hollywood. Yet on the same bill—in fact, immediately following it—you showed an untitled Army Signal Corps film which is the most gruesome and sadistic film I have ever had the bad fortune to see.

The Army film is full of the most horrible newsreel shots of actual executions and atrocities by Japanese troops, of Chinese people being buried alive, of corpses being dumped into trucks, etc. The commentary repeats insanely, "Have you killed *your* Jap today?" The whole is supposed to have some connection with getting people to take jobs in war plants. The film is the product of a pathological mind and should not be shown even to adults.

But to show it on the same bill with a film which you must know will draw great numbers of children—this is criminal negligence and, in my opinion, should be punished legally as such. Don't you people have the slightest knowledge of child psychology? Don't you feel any responsibility when you make up your programs?

I have a 7-year old son who saw *National Velvet* at the Commodore; luckily I had seen the film there the day before and was able to warn his grandmother, who took him, to keep him outside during the atrocity film. But the theatre, she told me, was packed with kids whose parents hadn't been warned. What do you think the effect of seeing such a film was on *them?* Sights like those shown in that film can be a painful memory with a child for years, a source of anxiety and neurosis.

I suggest you consult some child psychologist in making up programs which may be expected to draw children. . . .

Sincerely,

FEB. 25, 1945. DWIGHT MACDONALD

Sex in Films

In the old days, *ante* Hays Office, the movies were very sexy. Why the change? Possible explanations: (a) same kind of pressure-group tactics as put over Prohibition, with the Catholic hierarchy in the role of the Midwest reformers and alcohol-cranks; (b) accessibility of movies to children—note the even greater sexlessness of radio, which is even more accessible to all ages; (c) even for adults, the movies may be potentially too erotic for present-day society's good: the dark theatre, dreamlike atmosphere, sensual possibilities of lighting and camera angles (cf. *Esquire* camera technique, which can make a bare shoulder suggest nudity). The camera is the great *voyeur.*

Whatever the reason, a sexually promiscuous people gets only the most asexual movies. There is less exposure of female bodies on the screen than in the average musical show.* A certain amount of psychological suggestion is permitted, also some sex, within strict limits, in the plot situation. But in general, the social historian would go far astray if he took the movies as an accurate reflection of American sexual mores.

The purity of Hollywood films is all the more remarkable if one contrasts the treatment of sex in American and in European movies. The Europeans treat sex as a natural part of everyday human existence—sometimes tragic, some-

*Sex is perhaps considered a luxury, which the $6.60 musical-comedy audience can "afford" but which would be too distracting and enervating for the masses who must do the work of the world—just as Prohibition was supposed to protect the workingman against the Curse of Drink, but no one worried about the coupon-clipper. Burlesque, where even more nudity is permitted than in Broadway musicals, might seem to disprove the rule, for it caters to an audience economically *below* the movie audience. But this is precisely the point: the lumpenproletariat who patronize burlesque shows are as inconsequential, from the viewpoint of the social organism, as the top hats who go to musicals. The nonfunctional extremes can be permitted a sexual license which the workingclass and middleclass millions must be denied. For these millions carry on their patient shoulders the real burden of society: the production and distribution of goods, the rearing of children.

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times poignant, sometimes funny. Our films have a more adolescent approach, veering between the extremes of romanticism and sensuality, almost never *humanizing* the theme. Despite the Hays Office, our female stars depend much more on their physical charms than European stars do; they are younger, prettier, more voluptuous. (Rita Hayworth, Lana Turner, Betty Grable as against Garbo, Ingrid Bergman, Greer Garson.) So strong is the American urge to contemplate attractive female flesh—as shown in the pin-up girls which are a feature peculiar to the American armies—that sex is constantly being bootlegged, as in the "sweater girl" films which flourished until the Hays Office cracked down. And it is significant that the newspaper ads of movies, which are not controlled by the Hays Office, exploit the female body much more frankly than the films themselves dare to do.

The Proof-Reader as Critic

The ultimate criticism of Russell Davenport's *My Country* was not made by Rex Stout (". . . as American as Whittier or Whitman. They will be glad to move over on the shelf to make room for it."). Or Elmo Roper ("I am proud and reassured to belong to the America Mr. Davenport describes."). Or R. E. Gillmor of the Sperry Gyroscope Co., or Clinton Golden of the United Steel Workers, or even Mrs. Anna M. Rosenberg ("*My Country* isn't just poetry; it is almost a prayer."). But by the proof-reader on the *N. Y. Times* who let two quotations from the poem in a review appear as follows:

"Who fell in the tangled gullies of the Argonne,
Of whom we did not ask neutrality.
There is a splendid drive in lines like these:
This is the age of which the prophets tell:
In every sea, on every continent
The time has come for freedom—or for death.

"GI's Dream Party"

In the Sept. 25, 1944 *Life* there was a feature titled, "GI's Dream Party". Here we have one Pvt. John Farnsworth, just back from three years in the Pacific, a very young, boyish-looking blonde chap, photographed in various stages of a party given for him by Ginger Rogers, to which seven other Hollywood beauties were invited (and also the cameraman). They swim, play blindman's buff, have ice cream sodas in Ginger's soda bar, etc. The last shot shows him lying on a couch surrounded (at a safe distance) by the lovelies. Caption: "Relaxing on a Big, Big Sofa, he Heard the Girls Singing Softly." Pvt. Farnsworth cuts a silly and pathetic figure in these pictures: surrounded by Hollywood's leggy, bosomy symbols of sex —so many checks made out for great sums which cannot be cashed—he goes through his paces before the camera like a well trained doggie. The closest he ever comes to any contact with all this alluring feminine flesh is when he dances with one of the girls, while the rest look on with vapid approval. The sex-symbols are dominant, their giggling, frilly atmosphere reduces to zero whatever maleness Pvt. F might have; and their allies, the cameramen and publicity agents, are right at hand to see that Pvt. F gets the simulacrum of sex—but no more. "GI's Dream Party" is subtitled: "Beautiful Girls Made It Come True." But the point is that, so far as the unfortunate private is concerned, it *doesn't* come true and he might as well be still dreaming in a Pacific foxhole about Ginger and her friends for all the good it does him. There *is* sex here, however and a dream *does* come true—not for the private but for the readers of *Life*, most of whom are civilians. The whole business is really an excuse for giving them some pinup art. The episode could only have taken place in America, a country where even sex is faked commercially, where Hollywood has created amorous symbols so perfect that they have become inaccessible to the very males who created them for their pleasure.

Science: (1) The Detective Story

A book could be written on the role of science in Popular Culture. Note that one of the earliest forms was the detective story, which can be traced back to the memoirs of Vidocq, the master-detective of the Napoleonic era. Poe, who was more fascinated by science and scientific method than perhaps any other serious writer has ever been, wrote the first, and still the greatest, masterpieces in the genre. The detective story could only appeal to—only be *comprehensible* to, in fact—an audience conditioned to think in scientific terms: to survey the data, erect a hypothesis, test it by seeing whether it "works"—i.e., points to the true murderer. The very idea of an art genre cast in the form of a problem to be solved by analysis of the data could only have occurred in a scientific age. It has not been observed how much "serious" literature of our times is based on this idea: the novels of Conrad and Henry James, for example, are essentially studies in ambiguity; there is always a mystery to be solved, a riddle to be read, and the novel consists of successive hypotheses which get closer and closer to the central reality (without ever quite reaching it.) The data are psychological instead of materialistic as in the detective story, but the pattern and much of the effect is the same.

Science: (2) Arcanum Arcanorum

The above is the more sophisticated, intellectualized use of science—a direct transfer of its methods to Popular Culture. This is the attitude of the middle classes, who think of science as theirs (as, in a sense, it is). The masses are less confident, more humble and awed, in their attitude. *Their* kitsch conceives of science as the modern *arcanum arcanorum*, at once the supreme mystery and the philosopher's stone which explains the mystery. The latter concept is shown in comic strips like "Superman", and in the charlatan-science exploited by "health fakers" and "nature fakers" like Bernarr Macfadden. In this sense, science gives man mastery over his environment (as also in the detective story—Sherlock Holmes is the hero as mage, with scientific deduction substituted for the wizard's wand) and is beneficent. But science itself is not understood, therefore not mastered, therefore terrifying because of its very power. In this sense, as supreme mystery, science is the stock-in-trade of the "horror" pulp-magazines and movies. It has got to the point, indeed, that if one sees a laboratory in a Hollywood film, one shudders, and the white coat of the scientist is as blood-chilling a sight as Dracula's black cape. (A typical horror-film idea: in *The Man-Made Monster*, the hero gets filled with electricity in the electric-chair, is brought back to life and encased in a rubber suit, in which he is fatal to the touch, and finally "bleeds" to death when his suit tears on a barbed-wire fence and the electricity leaks out.) These "horror films" have apparently an indestructible popularity: *Frankenstein* was still popular in 1942 after eleven years, as against the normal life-span of two years (article in *Saturday Evening Post*, May 22, 1942). The other day I saw a local theatre's poster: "THURS. AND FRI.—ALL HORROR SHOW!"

If the scientist's laboratory has acquired in Popular Culture a ghastly atmosphere, is this not perhaps one of those deep intuitions of the masses? From Frankenstein's laboratory to Maidanek is not a long journey. Was there

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a popular suspicion, perhaps only half conscious, that the 19th century trust in science was mistaken and that science can be used for anti-human as easily as for human ends, perhaps indeed more easily? How otherwise explain the continued popularity, after more than a century, of the Frankenstein idea?

DWIGHT MACDONALD

Ours to Reason Why

EDUCATION is a grand thing. If we get the labor draft and postwar conscription we shall see that the people of America have indeed been "educated" since the beginning of this war. The American Legion puts out a spiffy booklet, full of pretty pictures of the stepping-stones in a young boy's life, with the purpose of proving to us how he will benefit from the conscription program. Of course, he will have to get used to the idea. To explain this, a slogan "integration with education" has been coined. It means that the little shaver beginning grade school will learn what a wonderful thing he will do when he gives a year of life to his country. Under the direction of skilfully trained teachers he will have years and years to grow into this noble belief. Of course opportunities to question will be eliminated if possible. And how trusting and easily convinced is a little tot of six! We know, because this kind of idea worked pretty well for the Nazis.

The movies and advertising aren't running "ideology" any more; they know they can't get by with that. But people are still going over the top for war bonds and their "security". The "well-adjusted" American is counting on getting his security.

War is a great adjuster. The well-adjusted person lives in his culture and parades with it to the land of the bow-wows, thrilling to the sound of drums. The well-adjusted person is the boy who fights overseas and comes back "normal", uncracked by the experience, because all through it he has kept his eyes riveted on the great purpose and his part in it. He not only keeps his doubts to himself; if he has any he throws them away in a little parcel labeled "cowardice".

The boy who comes back "psycho-neurotic", he's the one who hasn't been able to take it. Not that we're not making plans to get him back to normal, to help him and support him and love him. No, but we still call him "neurotic", because something happened to him out there. He couldn't fit it all in a pattern. Now he sits unaware of anything, and has to have sweet music from the old country played softly at him for days and days, for *he* is "unbalanced."

In the educational process—ask any teacher—the aim is not only to provide the pupil with the stuff of knowledge, but also to help him grow into "an adjusted individual." There are three kinds of adjustment. There is just plain being happy. There is being adjusted to one's culture, living *in* one's world, and deriving happiness from the feelings of warm contact and security amongst one's fellows. Third, there is the adjustment, not to any one culture, but to a humanitarian concern for the world as a whole. A person can be happy and poised not from being secure in the framework of doing what everybody else does, but from developing the faculty of objective appraisal which enables him to stand a little aside, as it were, watch the parade, disapprove of it, raise hell to help the world, land in jail because of it, but still not become all balled up inside.

The first kind of adjustment can be had in many ways and places. It can be had in fairyland. Most educators recognize a higher adjustment than this, for ours is a social world. The conflict comes between the second and third types of adjustment. The little boys in the playground who pretend to be "doing gun twaining, like my big bwother" are the fine young men of tomorrow, adjusted, secure, with the world ahead of them. We see the physical counterpart of this mental attitude and serenity plastered all over our billboards. The GREAT AMERICAN TYPE. Looked not to right of them. Looked not to left of them. Noble young millions.

There are many varieties of culturally adjusted people. The Arapesh of New Guinea who accepts his culture is docile, obedient to tradition, and blissfully adjusted among his fellows. He gets along all right in cultural isolation. But when a conflict arises, as when an individual or idea from a different culture enters his circle, he breaks down and loses his bearings. We read books about people like this and think how primitive it is to be such a slave to one's culture. Then we turn right around and do the same thing.

Few people want the third type of adjustment. It means fewer friends, and a lot more disapproval. Yet no one can say with a straight face that progress is made by accepting the status quo. Somebody has to get ideas. But education is mainly the process of learning what is already known. Learning to think—yes, they pay it lip-service in colleges and some other places—but a lot of people are not interested in learning to think, or having their offspring learn to think. The risks are too great. On the way to the third type of adjustment it is easy to throw up the sponge and conform in desperation, or to become so distraught that one can't mobilize any energy for anything. It is much easier to be happy the other way. And we want our children to be happy. Our child in jail? Why, the very thought!

Is the third type of person "abnormal" or intelligent? We know that thinking does not occur without a stimulus. Most thinking comes as a result of some kind of shock, some glimpse of conflict. If glimpsing conflict is abnormal and to be avoided, then thinking is on its way out. Everyone has his own idiosyncracies and is to some extent not perfectly happy. But for some people the idiosyncracy is to question; for others it is to want more than anything else to "belong to the group" and thus blindly to accept its standards. Now really, which constitutes the most serious psychological "set"? After all, do we want to educate people by giving them one view and telling them to learn it, or do we want to tell them different things, ask them to try to find the reasons for and against each, and then come through with their own conclusion? It may make for struggle and shock. But when the inevitable conflicts of bow-wow land get too much for everybody, and the culture cracks, the ones who have learned to think for themselves will not break down like the confused Arapesh. They will keep on thinking.

FRANCY CALHOUN

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Books

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE MASTER RACE. **By Bertold Brecht. Translated, with an essay, by Eric Russell Bentley. New Directions. $2.50.**

The *Private Life of the Master Race* is a totalitarian anti-totalitarian play. And while it attempts to show the effects of totalitarian thinking, it is in itself such an effect. The lack of character individuality, the lack of character development towards either integrity (morality) or disintegration (degeneracy), the stereotype of situation, the sociology of demonology without any given or implied political understanding, the lack of a psychological basis for character behavior, the presentation of a merely photostatic copy of totalitarianism—all this suggests an author who is not concerned with eliminating the reality of totalitarianism but is merely interested in changing masters.

In addition to the above, Brecht has no knowledge of the vitality of symbolism. Symbolism when used to capture the imagination is vastly different from symbolism as stereotype. In the first instance its very function depends upon the exploitation of individual creative resources; in the latter case it depends upon the establishment of a monolith. Thus Brecht's typical S. A. Man, his typical Worker, his typical Hitler-Soldiers, his typical Hitler-Youth, his typical Clergy . . . ad infinitum. The scenes are as stereotyped as the characters: the traditional mother-daughter relationship of sentimentality and sacrifice, the husband-wife relationship, suspicious and disloyal under pressure of the state, the "my land to me a kingdom is" farmer, essentially anti-state. . . . Of the multitude of characters and scenes only one may be said to have a potential human being in a conceivable circumstance: that is the Judge A in the scene *In Search of Justice.*

One is at a loss to say whether the mediocrity and cliché banality of the verse, the melodrama and stiffness of conversation, the extraordinary superficiality of theme is due to the translator, whose essay at the end of the play indicated a sufficient lack of sensitivity, of historical or critical understanding to make an unsympathetic translation a not too remote possibility. There is a causticity, a taut satiric versifying in some of Brecht's earlier German lyrics, as well, to a lesser degree, in *The Trial of Lucullus* which is absent from this play.

There are no dynamics, climax, direction. There is no growth or development. There are no problems, no tensions set up. Only the stereotype and the demon. For example, several of the scenes have for musical direction: "A band plays a barbaric march". If one wished to stage the play or broadcast it, what should one play? Not being acquainted with "barbaric" music, someone might be inclined to play Shostakovitch's Fifth Symphony. It seems obvious that Brecht can have no understanding of comparative cultures; that he still clings to the Victorian Upward-Onward concept of historical evolution: Progress. And barbarism is characterized by all those "evil" things that Brecht resists; therefore, "barbarism" is not merely chronologically prior to "civilization", but morally, it is an atavism. The wicked-degenerate, or the savage-uneducated are barbaric: African drums, the Indian caste system, tattooing, the French symbolists (Brecht and the Soviet "realists" would say) are equally barbaric.

Brecht is either disinterested in or unaware that this era is characterized by eclecticism, heterogeneity, sophistication and an historical appreciation of varying cultures and moralities. We are not living in an epoch dominated by a single *Weltanschauung* such as was medieval Europe with its rigid concept of the Absolutes. The Morality Play, with its seven deadly sins, was a legitimate artistic expression of medieval Christianity's total world outlook. Using Brecht's own criteria of "Progress", we could say that the Morality Play (to which this play is a close approximation) was a form from which the highly individuated, tensely subjective, introspective social drama of Ibsen was derived. Brecht has gone back to the Morality Play in an era which lacks a philosophical base for such a work.

Anyone who considers himself propagandist for a new order (or even only propagandist against an existing one —for Brecht has no positive values) must be prepared to embrace society as Vladimir Mayakovsky, Soviet poet and "realist" did, by saying: "I want the pen to be put on the same footing with the bayonet. I want Stalin in the name of the Politbureau to present reports on the production of verse along with reports on pig-iron and steel."

No, that is precisely what we do not want. And that is precisely what Bartold Brecht has given us: a production of propaganda verse, feebly executed and ideologically barren.

Eventually, if one is a creative individual, the inability to comply with the contemporary stereotype will compel one to liquidate himself (as Mayakovsky did) or wait until it is done for him. The propagandist has no legitimate place as critic of society, when he is himself ensnared by the totalitarian stereotype. It is only the artist who within his own work creates some positive, individual and generally unrealized or materially unrealizable values. He is the only genuine social critic.

Today, when such atavisms of the '30's as James T. Farrell's Proletariat and Soyer's innumerable Proletariette are re-inforced by an occasional Brecht play or a Pepsi-Cola "art" show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, we are consoled that with Pepsi-Cola and the latest Picassos and Miros, that only reflect and chronicle the "realism of horror" of this society, come the Klees, Chagalls, Feiningers and Milton Averys who create an imaginary world counterposed to totalitarianism. We can rejoice that in the same year with the chronicler, Bertold Brecht, has been published Anais Nin, whose passionate fantasy is tribute to the idea that only the imagination can utter the imperious defiance of society, only the imagination can conceive a reality individualistic enough to threaten the corruption of all existing reality.

DACHINE RAINER

HERRN THOMAS MANNS NEUSTE WANDLUNG. By Erik Ericson. Verlag: Dinge der Zeit (London & Montevideo). American Distributor: University Place Book Shop, 69 University Place, New York City. 40 cents.

"The one difference between the propagandists of the two world wars," writes Hannah Arendt in *Partisan Review* (Winter, 1945), "is that this time quite a few of the former dispensers of German chauvinism have made themselves available to the Allied powers as 'experts' on Germany and have lost through this switch not a bit of their zeal or subservience."

Thomas Mann is one of the most eminent of these zealous servitors of the Allied powers in this war, as this satirical pamphlet by Erik Ericson demonstrates. The author does not share the usual viewpoint that there has been a change in Mann's political values between World Wars I and II—

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except that he has switched masters. And these masters, whether Hohenzollern or Rooseveltian, are alike in being power-politicians who are in power at the moment they arouse Mann's loyalty.

Thomas Mann is a significant novelist, but the political arguments against him furnished by Erikson are irrefutable, proving that Thomas Mann in no way (either in the past or at present) could be called the representative of the intellectual life of Germany. He gives a timely account of Thomas Mann's behavior from 1914 up to our day, enlightening even for those well acquainted with the fact that the representative of the German "spirit" serves as cover for other "subservients". The result is at the same time amazing and amusing (a very appropriate mixture), for without close analysis nobody would expect nonsense of such dimensions from the "world's most famous writer." But the result is likewise inspiring and encouraging. Erikson examines the nonsense and hammers on it until it is clear from all sides: the nonsense is all that can be produced by those who, regardless of the form, defend the disastrous policy of existing governments. After reading this pamphlet, there remains for us no doubt: Erikson is one of the critics, rare in our time, rigorously determined to go to the end.

The literary form of the pamphlet leaves no room for conciliatory smiling. As a renewal of that kind of satire of which old Europe was proud before its terrible degeneration, it remorselessly confronts the reader at every point with the author's intention to have a clear-cut decision. Playing in all keys (he often employs satirical verses and gives in one place a revealing parody on Thomas Mann's style), his critique is by its very nature "aristocratic." Such critique has no room for demagoguery. It harmonizes, on the contrary, with the decision to stand alone rather than to go with the millions of . . . subservients.

W. L.

CONSCIENCE AND THE STATE. Legal and Administrative Problems of Conscientious Objectors, 1943-1944. By Julien Cornell. Published by the Author, distributed by The John Day Company. $1.

The status of the C.O. has improved in only two important respects in the past year. He has the possibility of being classified as IV-F, since all draftees are now given a pre-induction physical examination; and his appeal board is allowed to grant him C.O. classification without forwarding his file to the Dept. of Justice for investigation and hearing (although this is still necessary if the board does not grant his appeal forthwith). In other respects he still endures the same injustices, that the religious requirement is too narrowly interpreted, that the job he may be assigned to is generally unsuited to his capabilities and has little social value, that his dependents are uncared for, and that the C.O. camps are under the military control of army officers.

Mr. Cornell, who is Counsel to the National Committee on Conscientious Objectors of the American Civil Liberties Union, writes that both Great Britain and Canada are more liberal in their treatment of C.O.'s than the U.S., where our government continues to treat them as "unpatriotic slackers who should be punished for their views." His proposed reforms deserve special consideration now that post-war conscription seems certain.

E.G.

RACIAL STATE. The German Nationalities Policy in the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia. By Gerhard Jacoby. Institute of Jewish Affairs of the American Jewish Congress and World Jewish Congress. $3.

A very thorough record of the Nazi attempt by legislation to bring the New Order into the first non-German state annexed by Germany. With the division of the population into three castes (Germans, Czechs, and Jews) the Nazis built up a complex system of separate legislation for each group designed to control the political, economic, and personal life of every member of the Protectorate. The long range view of the Nazis had apparently the following objects in mind: the assimilation of the Germans living in the area, the segregation and suppression of the Czechs (with the possible final assimilation of those Czechs who proved loyal to Nazism), and the extermination of the Jews. Nazi ideology was implanted gradually and by "persuasion as well as coercion." A period of three years elapsed, for instance, before the complete anti-semitic program as practiced in Germany was established.

It is encouraging that after five years the hostility of the Czechs was still so great that in February, 1944, the Nazis issued to all German nationals living in the Protectorate a gun and 25 cartridges for self-protection. The failure of this novel legal experiment would be more significant than the defeat of the government by an allied victory, since V-day will do little to discredit the concept of race superiority, which itself is only one example of totalitarian fantasy.

E.G.

NO COMMENT DEPARTMENT

From a report on the Canary Islands put out by the International Information Division of the U. S. State Department in January, 1945, we quote the following estimate of the local reaction to American propaganda:

Re: "Victory", "USA", "En Guardia", "Battle of North Africa", "Norteamericana", "Villachia", "Convoy", "UNRRA":

Almost without exception the material was received with appreciation and pleasure. The Roman Catholic priests were particularly receptive, mentioning that they frequently found ideas for their sermons in our reading material. The Mayors and other Fascist officials appeared to enjoy the material. It was only among the peasants and lesser civilians that suspicion and hesitancy were occasionally found. . . .

LIBLAB JOURNALISM HITS BOTTOM (TO DATE)

There is no use denying that the Japanese die well; but we can feel that theirs is the rat's death, defiant in a corner until all fails and then suicide, while the Marine's is a proud man's death, in the open, advancing, for such simple, noble and old-fashioned reasons as love of comrades and of corps or ambition to set the flag atop bloody Suribachi. It is the best way to die.

—Charles G. Bolte, regular military commentator of "The Nation", in the March 3, 1945 issue.

WORDS-OF-ONE-SYLLABLE-DEPARTMENT

"When our union presented demands to the city council of Wauwatosa (West Milwaukee suburb), the city council asked only one question: 'What will you do if we don't give in?'

"Our union representative asked: 'Do you mean will we strike?' and pointed out that the union was pledged not to strike during wartime. The council came back with a take-it-and-like-it-or-quit answer."

—Testimony of Abram Flaxer, President of the State, County and Municipal Workers (CIO) before Senate Subcommittee on Wartime Health & Education, Jan. 25, 1944.

THE LITERARY LIFE

"I am a part of the Macy book service, which service is specifically there to help customers in obtaining books which we do not carry in stock. We deal with a certain type of individual. The ordinary run-of-the-mill shopper you usually find in department stores is not interested in ordering books in Macy's. The persons we get are usually intellectually superior to most of the department store buyers. Therefore, the book department and those in charge of the book department find it necessary for the members of the book service section to maintain a good appearance. This in turn necessitates extra expenditures for good clothing."

—Testimony of Miss Jean Rock before Senate Subcommittee on Wartime Health and Education, Jan. 28, 1944.

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"Max Weber's Politics" — a Rejoinder

Sir:

The undersigned is somewhat astonished to be taken to task as an "admirer" of Max Weber by an eminent author who refers to Weber's *opus* as "an immense work of the highest value." Meyer Schapiro speaks of Weber as "an intellectually inspired man of enormous energy" etc. The language of the prefatory note (see "A Note on Max Weber", by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, in POLITICS, October 1944) contained no comparable encomiums.

The note was not intended to present Weber as "a major prophet of our time", or to ascribe to a sceptical liberal without power the world historical significance of a Marx, Lenin, or Trotsky. May I repeat: *"Weber had no prophecy to offer."* (For a critique of Weber's unilinear construction of contemporary history as an inevitable process of formal bureaucratization I may refer to "A Marx for the Managers", *Ethics*, January, 1942.) All comparative statements of the note linking Marx and Weber referred a close and sympathetic reader unambiguously to Weber's sociological opus which can indeed stand such comparison. Just as Marx's occasionally wishful and erroneous predictions do not detract from his prophetic vision, so Weber's occasionally correct predictions do not give him the stature of "a major prophet of our time."

Schapiro admires the sociologist Weber and thinks lowly of the political analyst. He opposes the "incapacity of a German academic enemy of socialism" to the "grasp . . . of the very ablest revolutionary theoreticians."* Instead of seeing in Weber's theory of extraordinary leaders a continuation of W. E. H. Lecky's reflections on "moral genius" (*History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, Vol. I, p. 310f, New York, 1870), Schapiro in a yes-but manner has Weber "anticipate the Nazis", and protect "a realm of instinctive (?) ultimate values from desiccating rationality." Finally, he dismisses Weber's opinions as having had "little effect in his day."

Carl Schmitt, the high-brow Nazi, in 1928 ascribed to Weber's "famous articles" in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of 1917 "great influence upon the authors of the Weimar constitution" and considered them "a remarkable source for the theoretical evaluation of this constitution." He correctly referred to Weber's ideas as "resting upon the ideal of the democratic selection of leaders" and evaluated them as "the only strong ideology which was still available for parliamentary government." (*Verfassungslehre*, pp. 335, 341, 347). Nazis know their enemies.

We see no reason for doubting that Max Weber, like his brother Alfred, would have been a "November Criminal" in Nazi eyes, the more so as Max Weber had saved Ernst Toller from being court-martialed and killed and had paid his visit to Ludendorff in 1919 with the request that the bankrupt warlord offer his head to the Allies and face the consequences. Schapiro does not care to mention this or to give Weber's comment on his failure of a mission: "I now understand why the world defends itself against the attempts of men like him to place their heel upon the necks of others. If he should again mingle in politics one will have to fight him remorselessly." And Weber meant fight. He had fought the Kaiser bitterly and had long felt deeply ashamed of a nation who allowed themselves to be ruled by a phraseological and vain dilletante. If we may playfully venture a retrospective prediction about Schapiro's assumed "cruel dilemma" we feel Max Weber in 1933 might rather have become a colleague of Schapiro's than a Hitlerite. In short we would underscore his sentence: "His *whole* nature *was firmly set* against Nazi barbarity and anti-Semitism."

If Weber did not think much of "the party of Liebknecht and Luxemburg" and spoke of their following in terms reminiscent of Marx' *Lumpenproletariat* he did so largely because he had no respect for wishful and inexpert political dilletantes, no matter how highminded. Weber feared for good reasons that leftist *Putschism à outrance* would not lead to freedom but to the occupation of Germany by the Allies, "which would seal the fate not only of German socialism but also of every true democracy for generations." The difference between Weber and Lenin-Liebknecht on this score was that Weber warned Liebknecht's group and predicted accurately the "inevitable" whereas Lenin criticized the "measles" afterwards. Weber had a keen eye for "unpleasant facts" and Liebknecht was indignantly astonished when nobles and reactionary officers were elected to the Berlin Workers' and Soldiers' Council. Weber knew the German reactionary peasant proprietor and petit bourgeois in uniform better. (Cf. *Der Sozialismus* p. 515). The "sociologist" Weber contrasted the "unprejudiced mentality of social revolutionaries in Russia" with the docility of the German Lutheran "subject", and he contrasted the "movement of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia as the last quasi-religious movement" with the fashionable and faddish concerns of "café intellectuals of western Europe" (*Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, pp. 751, 295 f.) Weber's sociological analyses seem to us not as detachable from his political analyses as Schapiro would have it.

Without making anything of Weber's uncanny prediction of Tirpitz' submarine-campaign and its boomerang effect, we would not overlook comments on Russia which may somewhat balance Schapiro's evaluation. For instance in 1906, discussing Peshekhonov's Jacobin defense of "state-omnipotence" Weber—without reference to "Capitalism"—evaluated his ideas as "a dubious foretaste of a *centralist-bureaucratic* development which Russia might only too readily take under the influence of radical theoreticians." (*Archiv*, vol. 22, p. 316). "Only an unfortunate *European* war would definitely destroy the autocracy." (*ibid.* p. 338.) For the rest Weber feared imperialism: "One knows that the slogan 'liberation of oppressed peoples' on the part of the French revolution has helped to create the great military monarchies of the present; the Russian revolution, if successful, will also *result* in an iron age and bring in its train an immense increase of all armaments, especially of Germany. The idea of "unselfish" wars of liberation, nowadays, when capitalism stands snickering in the background, is a political utopia of a dangerous sort." (*Archiv*, vol. 23, p. 285.) Weber discusses the connection between imperialist capitalism and militarism in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. Of course, Weber, like all defense-minded liberals and patriots, accepted "his" army as a fateful necessity "within a world bristling with arms" and not as Schapiro has it as an "axiom of social well being." (*Congress of Arts and Science, St. Louis*, 1904, vol. VII, p. 745).

In April 1917 Weber was in agreement with Lenin on the "miserable role of the socialist ideologists" in the imperialist-Kerensky-government, and on the role of finance-capital. The third and decisive point was of course the mass of the Russian people. *"Objectively above all the peasants, the vast majority of the Russian people are in-*

*Schapiro's full text reads: "They reflect throughout the incapacity of a German academic enemy of socialism, no matter how astute and gifted as a sociologist, to grasp the significance of events which only a few of the very ablest revolutionary theoreticians understood clearly."—ED.

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terested in peace. Their material interests cannot be satisfied *in agreement with their ideals* (sic! G) without (1) the expropriation of all property in land not belonging to the peasants, (2) the liquidation of Russia's foreign debts. The latter point is decisive . . . *These difficulties could be removed only by way of a social revolutionary dictatorship lasting for years. By social revolutionist we do not think of some madman but simply of a politician who does not care for the 'sanctity' of private property in land* which in Russia is of very recent date. I do not know whether there are personalities who can do this. Revolutionists can however acquire stable power only if peace were quickly concluded. Only then the peasants would be at home and at their disposal . . . *What matters is only whether the truly 'democratic' elements, the peasants, artisans and industrial workers, apart from defense workers, acquire real power. That is not impossible, but at the moment it is not yet the case.*" (Italics mine-G.) (*Politische Schriften,* pp. 117f, 120.)

Schapiro makes light of this when speaking without qualification of Weber's "blind and grossly wishful insight." He suggests the contrary and not solely by the sentence "when the impossible happened." Weber could rightfully claim that he always had had "very strong sympathies for the Russian freedom movement" and in April 1917 he felt "it would be impossible to make prophecies about *the further course of the revolution.*" (Italics mine-G.) (*ibid.* p. 108.) Later (in his speech before Austrian officers in 1918) Weber, always sceptical of phraseological bombast, concluded one of his arguments with the statement: "Not the dictatorship of the worker but that of the bureaucrat is on the march." Did Weber feel that "under the influence of radical theoreticians" the centralist-bureaucratic development would set in of which Peshekhonov's ideas had given him a "dubious foretaste" in 1906?

Schapiro seems interested in making the most of Weber's bias; we, although indicating this in our note, were interested in introducing Weber as a thinker whose legitimate heirs cannot be Nazis but open minds. Not having known Weber's "volcanic personality", I see no reason for approaching the afflicted and stoic of yesterday as if he were "the man I love to hate." (Schapiro balances his encomiums with a jibe at "the few poor facts that he (Weber) can muster.") Today Weber may well furnish any party of freedom "with a mass of valuable material", as the late Nikolai Bukharin has put it. May the reader of our forthcoming volume of translations judge for himself.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN H. H. GERTH

Greece (3)

ON February 12, the representatives of EAM signed a peace agreement with the Plastiras Government. The agreement was a total defeat for EAM: it had to give up its demand for a general amnesty; it neither asked nor was offered representation in the Government; its ELAS forces were to disarm (and have since done so in fact) while nothing was said about disarming such right-wing forces as the Sacred Squadron, the Mountain Brigade and the hated Athens gendarmerie. But the war is not over, in two senses: (a) the Plastiras Government has continued to arrest and persecute EAM members; (b) the very extremism of this persecution has caused repercussions inside the Government which may bring about its fall—for Greek politicians know they cannot indefinitely rely on the British Army, and they know that EAM still controls about three-fourths of the country.

THE WAR IS NOT OVER

The Government has not as yet ventured to shoot many EAM adherents, but—according to an official protest by EAM made on March 6 to Regent Damaskinos—it has arrested them on a big scale, has interfered with their press, has retained thousands of hostages on one or another pretext, has incorporated members of the former pro-Nazi Security Battalions into the police and the National Guard. It has also, working closely with the abominable Rex Leeper, His Brittanic Majesty's Ambassador in Athens, put out a stream of vicious propaganda against EAM.

In a series of articles in the *N. Y. Post* of February 14-24, Leland Stowe, who spent some time in Athens recently, reports his impressions, which jibe remarkably well with what has already appeared in POLITICS on Greece. No suspicion of being pro-Stalinist, by the way, can attach to Stowe, whose famous reports on the Russo-Finnish war of 1940 were passionately pro-Finn. He tells how Athenian employers refused to take back their workers after the fighting. "Long lines of boycotted employees stood in front of shops, offices or hotels day after day. The families of many were starving. . . . The attitude of the employers and the Greek Government seemed to be—let them learn their lesson. The Athens police—the same police who served the Germans—were checking the political affiliations and personal associations of all middle and working-class people. A gigantic 'Red hunt' was on, openly encouraged by official British remarks and by British propaganda. The prisons overflowed with 'suspects.'

"In Athens I found virtually all upperclass Greeks suffering from an acute, almost hysterical Red phobia. . . . This near-hysteria forced me to ask myself one question: Can it be that these people talk so much about 'Red Terror' because they have guilty consciences? Because they themselves seldom if ever took any real part in resisting the Nazis?"

And yet, despite the fears and hatreds of upperclass Greeks, despite the crushing peace terms, despite the backing of British troops and diplomacy, despite the arming of royalist and fascist battalions and the disarming of ELAS, the political influence of EAM among the Greek people is still so great and that of the Plastiras Government so slight that the latter has had to make great efforts at liberalistic camouflage. This has been difficult because the Government's workingclass personalities seem to be largely unknown, while its right-wing personalities are all too well known. Plastiras himself commanded the Greek contingents that invaded the Ukraine in 1919 during the war of intervention against the Soviet Union. His new commander-in-chief is General Pangalos, who ruled Greece in dictatorial fashion between 1924 and 1927. His new Governor-General of Thrace and Macedonia is General Gonatos, who collaborated with the Germans against EAM during the occupation and "whose record includes the charge that he permitted an anti-Semitic rising in Salonika —the first such occurrence in modern Greece." (Joseph Harrison of the *Christian Science Monitor,* as quoted in *Common Sense* for March, 1945.)

The Government's workingclass stooges, on the other

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hand, have turned out to be largely unknown characters. Thus in January, the alleged leaders of the Greek Socialist Party (SKE) issued a denunciation of EAM, and the alleged leaders of no less than 17 alleged trade unions waited on British Ambassador Leeper to express "the thanks of the workers of Greece for their deliverance from the tyranny of the Communist Party." (These words are quoted from *The New Leader* (Feb. 3), which, with its usual credulity and irresponsibility when its anti-Stalin reflex is stimulated, devoted a whole article to these two developments without a word of criticism or doubt—in fact, the article is so stiff and "official" in phraseology that one suspects it was simply a handout from the British Ministry of Information or some such source.) It turned out, however, that the spokesmen for both the SKE and the trade unions were either completely unknown to persons familiar with Greek leftwing politics, or else had actually been connected with the Metaxas dictatorship. So, too, the report that the ELD, a white-collar group, has repudiated its membership in EAM turned out to be false: neither its secretary nor its president signed the statement. (See *The Economist* for Jan. 20 and *Tribune* (London) for Jan. 19 and Feb. 2.)

PLASTIRAS LOSES HIS "LEFT" COVER

On the other hand, such genuine liberals and trade unionists as have taken part in the Government have found it hard to stomach Plastiras' policies. For the fact that EAM's mass base still remains extensive forces Plastiras in two exactly opposite directions: he must crack it and chip it away, if he is to survive, by widespread arrests and repressions; but he must also go slow and keep as much liberal windowdressing as possible lest his regime find itself completely isolated when the British bayonets are withdrawn. It would take an extremely adroit politician to master such a dialectic, and, as we have seen, the General is not even moderately clever. Already there have been two serious defections from his official family.

On January 26, he lost one-third of the 21 directors of

The Greek Anthology

The greater part of the Greek National Debt, amounting to about £100,000,000, was floated in London between 1823 and 1898 when Greece faced bankruptcy after the Turkish war. The bonds bore interest at the incredibly high rate of 8.19 per cent. One third of the Greek Budget had to be set aside each year to service the debt. Even in the worst depression years, 1930-31, a third of the Budget went to pay interest on the debt. The original loans have been repaid many times over, but the interest rate keeps the Greek debtors tied to the creditors.

In 1932, a Republican Government in Athens tried to reduce the service on the debt, raising a storm of protest from the London financial Press.

In 1935 the present King George II, was brought back to Greece. . . . Interest payments on the National Debt were resumed. (*Reynold's News* (*London*), *December* 10, 1944.)

ATHENS, Jan. 25 (CDN)—Realizing that Greece must stabilize its situation against the day when British troops must be withdrawn to fight on other fronts, a group of industrialists recently called a secret meeting here of influential Greeks to discuss ways and means.

The conference, attended not only by leading industrialists but by elder professors of the University of Athens and at least one military figure, agreed that steps must be taken to avoid a resurgence of "anarchic elements" after the British withdraw. It was suggested that one way to achieve this would be by asking that Greece be admitted into the British Commonwealth of Nations. But conferees failed in unanimous agreement and the subject was dropped. (*George Weller, Boston Globe, January* 25, 1945.

ATHENS, Feb. 1—John Sofianopoulos, the Greek Foreign Minister, is to be received by President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Premier Stalin. Afterward, he says, "I hope to visit the capitals of the United Nations to discuss with their leaders the best way in which Greece can help in the prosecution of the war." (*N. Y. Times, February* 2, 1945.)

One matronly lady told me: "You've no idea what a Red terror we've lived through. Thank God the British came to save us. We have suffered more than any one else. For years we haven't even been able to collect rent from our property." (*Leland Stowe, N. Y. Post, February* 19, 1945.)

ATHENS, Feb. 23 (UP)—The Bishop of Epirus reported today that the populace of northwestern Greece was dying of starvation. . . . So far the district has received no relief supplies. British officials maintain that ELAS forces, which control the area, would not distribute the materials fairly.

Military Liason, an Anglo-American organization handling virtually all relief supplies, has not sent aid to other areas controlled by the ELAS, and they make up about three-fourths of Greece. . . . 70% of the organization's supplies are paid for by America and 30% by Britain. The UNRRA . . . has not brought in any of its own supplies so far. (*N. Y. Times, February* 23, 1945.)

ATHENS, Feb. 27—Four hundred British officers have been placed at the disposal of the Greek Government to help reorganize the Greek Army. (*N. Y. Times, February* 28, 1945.)

The Plastiras Government is trying to divert political passions from internal to foreign affairs; and a strong anti-Bulgarian campaign, culminating in the demand for a revision of the Greco-Bulgarian frontier seems to be in full swing in Athens. (*The London Economist, March* 3, 1945.)

ATHENS, March 7—George Cambadjoglou, 20-year old demobilized member of the ELAS, was shot dead by a policeman today "because he was singing the ELAS anthem which made me furious." (*N. Y. Times, March* 9, 1945.)

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his renovated General Confederation of Labor. The seven trade unionists who resigned did so because they objected to working with men who had collaborated with the Germans, and because they had insisted in vain that trade union elections be postponed until the tens of thousands of workers arrested and still held by the Government had returned home to take part. Constantine Poulos cabled about one of these union leaders:

"Fotis Makis, representing the telephone workers, who topped the list of those resigning . . . was offered the position of secretary of the committee at a handsome salary, if he withdrew his resignation. He refused to accept the offer, he told correspondents, in spite of the fact he has no shoes."

A month later, on February 20, Plastiras lost his Minister of the Interior, Rhallis, who resigned when Plastiras created a special under-Secretariat for Gendarmerie and Police ("Ministry of Interior Security"), an institution which in Greece is closely associated with the terroristic Metaxas regime, and when he gave this ominous post to his old friend, General Vlahos.

According to the *N. Y. Times* of Feb. 21, Rhallis had worked with two other members of the cabinet, Kolyvas and Makropoulos, to moderate the treatment of EAM and to include EAM in the Government. This revolt was all the more signficant in that Rhallis and Makropoulos were two of the three Government representatives in the peace negotiations with EAM. The third member, Sofianopoulos, the foreign minister, is a liberal who has always been friendly to Russia; he has played Plastiras' game so far. The Rhallis crisis was surmounted—after Sofianopoulos had dropped in at the British Embassy—but, with two of Rhallis' friends still in the cabinet and with Moscow beginning to criticise openly the Government's policies—which are becoming more rather than less reactionary—Plastiras may find himself confronting a crisis which will strip him of his remaining leftwing camouflage or unseat him or both.

THE CITRINE REPORT

The Churchill-Labor Government's campaign against EAM came to a climax with the Citrine Report (Feb. 8), a really masterly piece of propaganda. This was not a *Government* document—Churchill took care to avoid that—but a *trade-union* document, issued by the British Trades Union Congress. The Government simply put a plane at the disposal of Sir Walter Citrine, General Secretary of the TUC, and four of his fellow union leaders; the plane took them to Athens on January 22 and took them back to London on February 3; that was the extent of the Government's part in the Report—except, of course, that His Majesty's Ambassador in Athens and His Majesty's General Scobie and His Majesty's press representatives were "most helpful" in arranging interviews for the five Representatives of the British Workingclass.

The finesse shown in the above arrangements appears also in the Report itself—for a copy of which I am indebted to the British Consul General here, who was kind enough to send me one with his compliments. The Germans or the Russians would have put all kinds of whoppers into such a report; they would have denounced EAM as a gang of pluto-Judaio-Bolsheviks (or Bukharinist-Trostkyite-wreckers); they would have whitewashed the Plastiras regime. But the British, with centuries of experience as imperialists, are much subtler. The only important misstatement I found in the Report is that the Communist domination of EAM "had become virtually complete" by Dec. 3, 1944—and even here it depends on what is meant by "complete". Furthermore, not only is the Report phrased in the most admirably restrained and sober language, but it even gives some evidence favorable to EAM. Judging from the editorial reaction of the London *Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*, two papers which have been critical of the Government's Greek policy, I should say the Report succeeded in doing two things which at first glance might have seemed incompatible: (1) backing up Churchill's slanderous attacks on EAM, and (2) calming down the disturbed British liblabs. It did this by admitting frankly a few facts favorable to EAM, by reporting at length unfavorable testimony about EAM's terroristic behavior from British troops and Greek opponents of EAM (always carefully recording that this was hearsay testimony—but always equally careful not to set down any hearsay from the EAM side), and by ruling out in advance all consideration of the main question: the political situation.

I don't mean to imply that Sir Walter and his companions necessarily drew up their report with any conscious effect to deceive. Its effectiveness may well come from the very fact that they speak as typical British labor leaders: honest, unimaginative, comfortable chaps, so deeply impregnated with rulingclass values that their hypocrisy has become unconscious and even, subjectively speaking, sincere. The main purpose of their trip seemed to them a simple one: to bring together the Greek trade union leaders and get an agreement on the holding of "free" union elections. To evaluate or intervene into the political situation was no part of their purpose: "We did not see representatives of political parties, of which in Greece there are many. We did not wish to be drawn into the vortex of Green politics. We did not regard it as any part of our mission to investigate whatever political differences may have arisen in Greece. Nevertheless, we were deluged with letters, and documents, and with personal requests for interviews from political groups . . ." These comfortable pensioners of British imperialism simply could not understand that politics is today for the Greeks literally a life-and-death matter. One of them remarked contemptuously: "Every second man in Greece seems to be the secretary of a political party." (These Latins!) They were bewildered, and a bit resentful, to find that arranging union elections was not such a simple matter as it had looked from the drowsy fastness of Transport House. "We arrived in Greece to undertake what we thought would be a comparatively straightforward task. We found, however, that it was impossible to segregate the trade union question from the atmosphere of tension, suspicion, recrimination and fear of reprisals which was prevalent." But the Citrinians rose to the occasion; despite the "appalling complications" they found in Greece, they managed to reach a clear verdict: EAM is guilty as charged . . . by Churchill.

The factual content of the Report can be boiled down to two major points:

(1) The best-known leaders of the Greek trade union movement have always supported and still support EAM: "We informed these delegates [i.e., from Plastiras' newly constituted General Confederation of Labor] that the only persons of whom we had knowledge in the Greek trade union movement were Kalomiris, who was General Secretary of the Confederation in 1935; Stratos, who was a prominent member of the Confederation; and Theos, former Secretary of the United Trade Union Federation of Labor . . . who throughout recent events had given their support to EAM." The Citrine group travelled to the little town of Lavadhia, in EAM territory, and conferred with Kalomiris, Stratos and Theos, plus the Secretary of the Railway Workers Union, Marolis. They brought these four

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back to Athens, under safe conduct, for a meeting with the Plastiras labor leaders. An agreement was reached on the holding of union elections; the EAM leaders signed with one reservation: that the elections should not be held until the thousands of workers held in jail by the Government should have returned home.*

(2) In the recent fighting, ELAS (and especially its strong-arm section, OPLA) had committed many atrocities: prisoners had been mistreated and sometimes shot; civilians in Athens, including trade union leaders, had been executed without trial; the rules of civilized warfare had been otherwise violated by ELAS. These charges, which take up a good third of the report, are based on the testimony of the Plastiras people ("We were informed by the Regent that, as far as they could estimate, the number of persons murdered was at least 10,000.") and of the British Second Independent Paratroop Brigade. These are not very reliable sources; paratroopers in any army are tough young fellows who have volunteered for the this especially dangerous and murderous kind of fighting, and may be presumed to be either apolitical or rightwing. "ELAS were the dirtiest fighters our troops had encountered," notes the Report; one of the examples of these "dirty" tactics is that "all the ELAS forces were in civilian clothes." This is not at all to deny the probability that ELAS committed atrocities (though not on the scale alleged by Plastiras). But the Report is silent on anti-ELAS atrocities, and the delegation evidently only talked to one side on this matter. Furthermore, it is hard to see by what logic the atrocity issue is given so much space in a Report which is avowedly non-political and concerned only with trade union matters.

Postcript: I have just been informed that the Athens correspondent of the *Greek National Herald*, the liberal (not Stalinist) Greek language daily in New York, cables that the interpreter in Greece for the Citrine delegation was Roxanne Sotiriades, the wife of the *N. Y. Times'* correspondent, A. C. Sedgwick. This daughter of an upperclass Athenian family is an ardent and active reactionary, I am told by people who know her, and formerly a great admirer of Hitler and Mussolini. Certainly, judging from his dispatches on the Greek fighting, her husband is the most openly reactionary foreign correspondent the *Times* has employed since Mr. Carney smeared the Loyalists from Franco's territory during the Spanish Civil War.

For the Third Camp in Greece

SIR:

Your dozen fiery pages on Greece in the past four issues of POLITICS are alive with a grand, snorting rage, and they make good reading. Yet they leave this reader absolutely unconvinced.

Day by day, the evidence has mounted up that the revolt in Greece was conceived and directed by Stalin. He audaciously double-crossed Churchill, for his own ends; and already he has gained some of them, as I shall show. The dominant struggle in Greece is between the British Empire and the Russian Empire. And instead of lending a hand to either of them, we should oppose them both.

EAM and its military arm, ELAS, are the creatures of the Kremlin. We would all know this if we were in Greece—that is, if we were still alive. But we would not be still alive if we had attempted to play a part in the underground movement while openly resisting the Communist Party with any vigor. For the Greek CP and EAM have a junior GPU of their own, which is called OPLA; and this proficient gang would have murdered us, exactly as in Yugoslavia the secretary of the Yugoslav Communist Party, Joseph Broz, alias Tito, has been murdering all the CP's opponents in the underground.

Because of this danger in Greece we would probably have found it necessary either to sit on our hands or to join EAM and keep our mouths shut about the CP; and after the German army had fled from Greece we would have awaited the earliest safe moment for pulling out of EAM. Which is what some of the minor groups in it have been doing in recent weeks.

1. To begin with, let us not be thrown off the track by our disgust at "the Churchill-Labor government's provocative intrigues," which you expose in so much furious detail. What does it matter who provoked whom, who was intriguing against whom? It is like picking the right side in a war by asking who fired the first shot.

2. Neither should we support EAM because it is or was supported by the great majority of Greeks. Suppose the majority wanted to bring the king back—would we help them do it?

Majority support is no proof that EAM's trends are progressive. Roosevelt is supported by a majority of the population and a distinctly larger majority of labor; and Browder's present position on the war has as much support here as EAM has or had in Greece.

3. EAM is led by Communists. This you concede; but the degree of CP leadership and control is not generally appreciated. The secretary of EAM is Demetrios Partsalides. He is a Communist. This is all we need to know. For any popular front whose secretary is a Communist is controlled by the CP: not only the secretary but the other key people are Communists.

The leader of the EAM delegation that recently negotiated a peace agreement with the Plastiras government was George Siantos. And who is Siantos? He is the secretary of the Greek CP.

Now, since EAM is controlled by Stalin, evidently its military arm, ELAS, is also firmly in Stalin's hands. The CP has appointed the officers of ELAS. It has put its key men in place all the way down the line. Every regiment, battalion, company, even every platoon and perhaps every squad, has a Communist as the key figure. The CP commissars and the OPLA spies and goons are everywhere. We know this because we know how Stalinism works.

4. You say of Stalin that "his press and radio have scrupulously refrained from any comment at all on events in Greece." Apparently this has been true of his *Russian* press and his *Russian* radio—up to a day or two ago. And the reason is simply that, in spite of his effrontery, Stalin, like Churchill, is here obliged to play dumb. He can wage a minor war in Greece, at the cheap cost of a few thousand lives; but he cannot afford an open break with Britain at this time. For there's a larger war on.

However, what have Stalin's press and radio outside Russia been saying? Stalin controls Greece's neighbor, Bulgaria; and the radio there has been rooting for EAM all along. It is the same with the CP's propagandist apparatus in this country. For lack of time I never see the *Daily Worker*, but I do glance at the CP's newsletter, *In Fact*, and I have also heard William S. Gailmor on the Blue Network, as well as other local, lesser fry, like

*We have seen above that the Government rejected this stipulation, with the result that a third of its own labor leaders later resigned. As an example of the bias that runs through the Citrine Report—for all the moderation of its phrasing—we might note that it expresses no opinion as to the merit of this reservation by EAM, but when Plastiras' Minister of Labor insists that no representative can be accepted on the commission to supervise the union elections if he has any "contact or connection with EAM", the Report observes: "This reservation seemed to us to be reasonable."

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Johannes Steel on WHN, in New York; and you can be sure they have been boosting EAM insistently.

5. You attempt a parallel with the Spanish Civil War. But in Spain the chief thing was a *civil* war. The international aspects were not prominent in the beginning; they did not become so till afterward. In Spain the control at first was not in the hands of Stalin; he acquired it later on, principally by selling arms to the Loyalists while the other Powers embargoed them. Yet the permanence of the Kremlin's control of Spain was always in doubt. There was never any approach to a certainty that if the Loyalists won the war they would remain under Stalin's thumb. For the embargo would then be lifted, and peacetime supplies could be imported from other countries.

6. It seems to you that Stalin was faithful to the promise he had given Churchill at Teheran that Greece would come within the British sphere of influence. Stalin was keeping his hands off Greece. The Greek CP'ers had decided on their own hook to resist the Churchill-Papandreou demand for disarmament of ELAS.

Such independence of Moscow by the CP of any country is enough to make one rub one's eyes. Your main reason for this astonishing diagnosis is the fact that the Communists in EAM seemed to have aborted a revolt two months earlier, when the Germans were clearing out and the British had not yet arrived. Since the Stalinists vetoed an uprising in October, surely Stalin could not have ordered it in December—this is the argument.

But it does not follow at all. You yourself point out that Churchill kept relentlessly at work to weaken EAM. You say the British "forced EAM to fight." Well, what this really means is that the British forced Stalin either to fight at once for the retention of his power in Greece or to submit and let it be sapped away.

This choice confronted Stalin in *December*, not October; therefore in *December* he ordered the revolt which in October he had prevented.

7. By "revolt" I mean not a genuine effort to seize power, but simply military insubordination of ELAS to the government put into power by Britain. It is immaterial which side struck first or what was the immediate cause.

The revolt was not, as Churchill calls it, an attempted *coup d'etat*. For Stalin could not have hoped to drive Britain out of Greece at that stage of the game. Greece is so vital to the British Empire that Churchill would pour in any number of troops needed to subdue the uprising. Consequently there was no chance that ELAS could win a military victory by its own strength. (The case of Ireland isn't parallel, for reasons which I lack the space to indicate here.)

Churchill was sure to win—unless Stalin flung large reinforcements into Greece from Russia or one of its Balkan satellites. But this would produce an open rupture with Britain, which of course the Kremlin had to avoid as long as the war with Germany continued. Hence such reinforcements were out of the question.

Stalin had been playing for time, hoping to let Britain have temporary and superficial control of Greece while he himself gradually drew Greek Macedonia and its port of Salonika into the Russian orbit; after which the rest of Greece would follow. But Churchill, though far from Stalin's match, is not a fool; he recognized this game; he decided to clinch his control, and therefore he insisted on immediately disarming ELAS and thus crippling EAM and the Greek CP. It was the showdown; Stalin's hand was forced. And he responded with a revolt which he knew was foredoomed in a military sense, but not politically.

8. What did Stalin expect to gain by this? We do not know the full answer, but there are a few points that suggest themselves.

(A) Stalin has fomented a world-wide liberal-labor hullabaloo against Churchill. What goes on in Poland and elsewhere in Russia's new sphere is almost totally hidden from outside eyes by an iron Russian censorship; but what goes on in Greece is imperfectly hidden by a *limited* British censorship. For Churchill does not head a totalitarian state and therefore he cannot smother the truth, as Stalin can and does. Taking advantage of this, Stalin has coolly put Churchill on the spot, forcing him to appease the unhappy outcry of the lib-labs by ditching King George II for the present at least, instituting a regency, and arranging to have Plastiras sign a peace treaty with CP Secretary Siantos that provides for a plebiscite on the question of the return of the monarchy and for a general election this year.

Stalin will turn his propaganda spotlight on this election in order to prevent Churchill-Plastiras from counting themselves in by too big a vote. Apparently he does not want EAM to take the premiership immediately; but he does want to augment its weight as a pressure-group.

(B) The Greek revolt carries this message from Stalin to Churchill and Roosevelt: "Wherever I have a powerful organization I will use it, and there you must deal with me, regardless of formal agreements at Teheran, Moscow, and Yalta. In one country or another I will manipulate the CP and its fronts to instigate hunger demonstrations, strikes, general strikes, even revolts — any method that is useful. *This means Germany above all.*"

9. We delude ourselves if we think that in Greece or anywhere else we can take an organization like EAM away from Stalin; or that we can win away the members of any such organization by subordinating ourselves to it; or that in the long run the Greek CP and EAM, or their counterparts anywhere in the world, will be forced by their very numerical strength to serve the welfare of the masses. Only further misery lies at the end of that road.

Our method must be different, in Greece and elsewhere. The Russian Empire vs. the British Empire—this is the present alignment in Greece. How can we deal ourselves in? A Third Force, a Third Camp—how can it operate in Greece, or in any other country in a similar plight? How can it even get started? This is the problem we must work on as we draw nearer to the postwar, prewar world.

NEW YORK CITY SAMSON HORN

—Horn's Third Camp position, while more defensible from a socialist standpoint than the "New Leader's" critical support of Britain, seems to me nevertheless to proceed from a somewhat mechanical over-estimation of the power of Stalinism. To state that any movement anywhere whose leadership is largely Stalinist is bound inevitably to develope as the Stalinists want it to, and that "we delude ourselves if we think that in Greece or anywhere else we can take an organization like EAM away from Stalin"—this is to regard Stalinism as an all-powerful Principle of Evil that operates independently of concrete historical circumstances. I cannot believe that any man-made organization can be so perfectly effective, whether for good or evil. In my articles on Greece, I have tried to show the historical factors which make EAM an expression of a popular movement of revolt much broader both in personnel and aims than the power-interests of Stalin.

To reply briefly to Horn's major points:

(a) The main purpose of the articles was to expose the British Government's rotten policies in Greece; this is independent of the question of support of EAM; I think Horn shows a sectarian obtuseness when he dismisses this

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expose as so much "furious detail" that is somewhat beside the point.

(b) Horn exaggerates the degree to which the Stalinists control EAM. As I have shown, EAM includes practically all the anti-royalist popular forces from ELD to the Socialists and Social Democrats. General Serafis, military head of ELAS, is a liberal, not a Communist.. The London Tribune *for February 2 states that Kalomoris, head of the Greek trade union movement and an important EAM leader, has always been known as "an anti-Communist Social Democrat." Tsirinilos, one of the three EAM leaders who negotiated the peace with the Government, is also a Social Democrat.* (New Leader *please note.) Tsirimokos and Stratis, the best-known leaders respectively of ELD and the Greek Socialist Party, apparently are still loyal to EAM. Now if the Stalinists dominate EAM to the extent claimed by Horn, then we must believe either that all these leaders have become secret Stalinists, or else that they have all decided to commit political suicide.*

(c) Mass support in itself, it is true, means nothing. But when it is given to a movement which aims to dethrone the King, free Greece from British tutelage, break the military and police power of the fascist-minded Greek upper classes, and institute a program of economic and social reforms—then, I submit, it does mean something.

(d) I could not deny, nor have I, either that the Stalinists everywhere support EAM or that their support is based on Russia's imperialistic interests and not on the interests of the Greeks. But the mere fact that the Stalinists support a movement seems hardly a reason in itself for us not to support it.

(e) If the Big Three can convert a civil war into an imperialist war simply by taking sides in it, then I can see small possibility of a socialist taking part in such struggles from now on. For certainly the big powers are now strong enough and world-imperialist enough to intervene constantly in such conflicts in backward and colonial nations for their own advantages.

Finally, there was one notable exception to the world-wide support which the Stalinists gave EAM during the fighting: not a word of support or encouragement, not a hint of objection to British intervention came from Russia itself. Stalin had made his bargain at Teheran, and he recognized Greece as Britain's legitimate prey. The British Tories—the more cynical of them, at least—are well aware of this, and properly grateful. Harold Nicholson, one of the Tory's leading specialists in foreign policy, rose in Commons a few weeks ago to pay tribute to Stalin in these terms:

"Marshal Stalin has made many promises, public and private, to his allies, and every one has been kept. . . . I believe that the House is entitled to consider . . . with what loyalty Marshall Stalin behaved to the Prime Minister in the Greek crisis. In that crisis of three weeks, when there were great dangers, was there one word, one whisper from Moscow that would have increased our difficulties? Not one. That is what I call complete loyalty."—D.M.

LITERACY BEGINS AT HOME

Here is the only place where any person with something to say (and knows how to say it) may express himself.
—from an advertisement for "Controversy" magazine in the Jan. 27 "Nation".

F. D. R.'S LAST CHANCE TO WIN THE PEACE
by Norman Thomas
—heading of a pre-Yalta article in "The Progressive" for February 12.
Who said perpetual motion is a scientific impossibility?

The Intelligence Office

REBUTTAL BY MAX EASTMAN

SIR:

I described Macdonald's political philosophy as a "peculiarly elastic contraption, pieced together out of literary revoltism and certain loose scraps of the old Marxian metal." In reply he says: "Max Eastman's sketch of me as a *Marxist sectarian* is pure fantasy!"

What can you say to a man whose mind works like that?

I must, I suppose, regretfully accept the fact that my style is too flabby for Macdonald's comprehension. There remains the hope that some readers were senile enough to know what I meant by the above phrase, and by "withdrawing from all earthly groups and movements, and enlarging his own head sufficiently to contain a full-armed proletarian revolution." I hope they also grasped the meaning of the word *infantile* in "Infantile Right of the Trotsky movement."

It does not mean "orthodox"; it does not mean "blind sectarian faith"; it does not mean "inevitability business."

It means playing irresponsibly with "revolutionary moods and dispositions" — to use Lenin's phrase — unsobered by a sense of fact on the one hand and of practical consequences on the other. Macdonald discovered the revolution just at the moment when mature revolutionary socialists, appraising the significance of fascism, were turning from it. They spoiled his fun, and there is in consequence an element of tantrum in his Infantile Rightism.

Perhaps the best way to explain the phrase further is to quote a few pronouncements from his own platform called "Ten Propositions on the War":

"The only real solution is to deflect the current of history from fascism to socialism." "The socialist alternative . . . can be realized only by revolutionary mass action." "The British and American bourgeoisie, tied to a system of private property hopelessly archaic vis-a-vis the economic demands of modern warfare, are unable to organize production sufficiently to win their own imperialist war. Such planning as we have seen has come from the working class." "Social revolution in England or America would . . . most probably be short and relatively peaceful . . . neither a protracted nor an especially violent struggle. Its chief opposition will be a ruling class so discredited by its military incapacity and so demoralized by its own mistakes as to be unable to offer serious resistance for some time to come. As in the French and Russian revolutions, the *ancien regime* will surprise everybody with the suddenness and completeness of its collapse." "There exists today no organized leadership for such a revolutionary policy as we advocate. But while this is a serious lack, it is not a fatal one. New organizational forms must and will be found." (*Partisan Review*, July-August, 1941)

These hard and sparkling wisdoms have never, so far as I know, been revoked, and I think they justify me in asserting that Macdonald "thinks there is a revolution coming," and thinks it is coming soon. That this imminent revolution is going to be "proletarian" and "super-democratic," I inferred from Proposition 10, which reads as follows:

"To win the war against fascism, we must work for the replacement of the present governments in England and

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the United States by *workingclass* governments committed to a program of *democratic socialism.*"

If "workingclass governments" are not proletarian, and "democratic socialism" is not super-democracy, that of course is Macdonald's business, so long as the whole operation is taking place inside his head.

As I said, it is only when the thing busts loose and takes a stand in the real world that we have to take it seriously. At such times a "democratic socialism" which is not super-democratic, a "workingclass government" which is not proletarian, become a little worse than just loony. They form too natural a transition to a "people's rebellion" against a government pledged to hold a popular election. They prepare the mind too deftly to find the Communist Party in command of this mysterious revolt of the people against their own sovereignty.

That Macdonald's belief in "workingclass governments committed to a program of democratic socialism" coexists in his head with the opinion that serious allusions to constitutional government as such are "infantilities," is additional evidence of his irresponsibility.

Further evidence is contained in the November issue of POLITICS, where we learn that he does not believe in the validity of elections anyway — and this, not on the old ground of money influence, but because of psychological differences in the voters!

"The trouble with elections is that they do not measure the intensity with which people hold their views. Who is to say that ten men and women who will die for their beliefs are not as 'deserving' of realizing those beliefs as a hundred who will not do more than mark a cross on a ballot?"

Thus the Macdonald type of "workingclass government," besides being non-proletarian and sneering at constitutionality, is committed to a "democratic socialism" which does not believe in elections!

I don't want to seem unappreciative, but I still think it would be better if Macdonald would take this literary revolution back into his own head and keep it there, at least until things quiet down so we can enjoy it.

NEW YORK CITY — MAX EASTMAN

BLURB

Sir:

Here is my renewal to POLITICS, which is the most readable magazine I see. Most of the political mags have commitments here (e.g., to Uncle Joe) or there (e.g., to FDR) that keep them from saying what they think. You say what you think, and I am almost always interested. Sometimes I even agree. With the best wishes for continued vigor,

GRAFTON, N. Y. — GRANVILLE HICKS

SUALL ONCE MORE — AND FINALLY

Sir:

I have recently been informed that you are responsible for putting "Chicago, Ill." beneath the letter by Irwin Suall in your November issue, although the letter was written in New York and postmarked there.

Suall is not and has never been organizer of the Chicago Young People's Socialist League. Further, the Chicago YPSL disclaims responsibility for the letter and disagrees with its contents.

VIRGIL J. VOGEL
Acting Organizer
YPSL
CHICAGO, ILL.

—My apologies to the Chicago YPSL for a careless error on my part.—ED.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Sir:

Having just concluded Macdonald's "The Responsibility of Peoples", I can merely exclaim bravo and encore! For a year now I felt that I was slipping when I found great difficulty in explaining to fellow trade-unionists the perennial question of "German Barbarism". Notwithstanding my "Marxicological" background, the above named article gave me renewed understanding of this important question. You reprinted your well documented article on Greece in the past, and I suggest that you reprint "The Responsibility of Peoples" for separate circulation too. I could use a few hundred myself.

Incidentally, I was interested in the reasons you give for the relatively high vote of the S.L.P. As one who voted for this party and who advised others to do so (although I am neither a member or sympathizer), may I explain my reasons? I know that the S.L.P. is hopelessly sectarian and even backwardly "reformist" in many ways. Witness their stand on abolishing capitalism through constitutional means. They do not represent much of a threat to the capitalist system with such a program. During the last war and following it, the S.L.P. was probably the only "left" workingclass party that practically went untouched by the red-hunters. In 1920, the Lusk Committee Report on Revolutionary Radicalism summed up their report on the S.L.P.; "Owing to the dogmatic stand taken by the leaders of this party, it plays no very significant part in the general revolutionary movement in this country." (Volume 1, Part 1, Section 2, page 827.) This is undoubtedly true today. But in the last election, in view of their consistent propaganda against capitalism, a vote for the S.L.P. could be construed only as a vote against capitalism and its barbaric institutions.

I think Dwight Macdonald, for all his good intentions, took a patently false attitude on the elections. He stated in the October POLITICS: "A liberal leader evolving in a socialist direction, is a very different proposition from a socialist leader evolving (or rather, long since having completed the evolutionary process) in a liberal direction." Thus Macdonald, unwilling to support the socialist-liberal Thomas for election, would be willing to campaign for a liberal-socialist representing a farmer-labor party. In the history of the revolutionary movement, it has been rare indeed for liberals' turning socialist not to wind up eventually in liberal-reformist organizations acting against the genuine revolutionary aspirations and movements of the working class. Rare for individuals, but NEVER for organizations. While Macdonald has often rejected other panaceas, he has accepted the panacea of supporting a labor-farmer (middle class ideology) party, which could only be pro-war and a left prop to the bourgeois democratic capitalist order, which in turn paves the way for the totalitarian order of capitalism. This is the true evolutionary process, and history has demonstrated this over and over again, much to the sorrow of the working class.

POLITICS is helping to clear the air on many theoretical and factual questions of the revolutionary movement (organized and unorganized). On the "Labor-Farmer Party" question, POLITICS pollutes the air. Eventually I hope to see POLITICS as part and parcel of the movement for a New Communist Party in the United States and a New Communist (4th) International throughout the world.

BROOKLYN, N. Y. — L. BALABAN

P.S. I object to your references to the "Communist Political Association" as "Communist" this or "Communist" that. Marquis Child's column in the *N. Y. Post* for March 17 tells about a group of liberated Russian workers he in-

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terviewed in Cologne: "We asked what they thought about Stalin. Almost as one, they repeated several times, 'Father Stalin, Father Stalin.' Their faces, as they said this magic phrase, were wreathed in smiles. Asked how life would be in Russia after the war, they said Father Stalin would see to it that there was plenty for everyone." May I suggest that we scientifically characterize such people as "the Followers of Father Stalin."

Editor's Reply:

(1) We are planning to reprint "The Responsibility of Peoples", with several new pages added, as a pamphlet to sell for 15c, 10 for $1. Orders will be accepted now, to be filled when the pamphlet comes off the press next month.

(2) The June issue will have a special section on the Michigan Commonwealth Federation which will deal with the kind of questions raised above.

(3) I, too, for some time have been dissatisfied with "Communist" as a description of Father Stalin's followers. A new term is much needed. Comrade Balaban's suggestion is good, but too cumbersome for frequent use. "Stalinist" is accurate but flavorless. Have POLITICS readers some suggestions?

FROM ITALY

Sir:

It happens that I am so lucky to get now a copy of the April issue of POLITICS, some friends from London helping to mail it, and I am translating many pages in order to have typed copies circulated in my milieu.

I beg now the Censor to let me say to you: physical starvation of common people in Italy is surely well evidenced for any citizen of the States who has some relative or friend fighting here. But *our intellectual starvation I feel is inadequately stressed.* Actually, it is far worse than any idea you can conceive of it. To give you a glimpse: my personal library has been burnt by fascists in Genoa; many friends of mine have lost their books—due to the recurrent searches by fascist police, civil and secret; public libraries are damaged or dispersed. . . . Have you any way (and the will, of course) to help us in this field? That is, to send me POLITICS and whatever you consider useful for an intellectual cut out from the thinking world?

Thank you. I remain, sir,

yours,

ITALY XYZ (a native of Italy)

—The mails are now open to Italy and France, and we are sending POLITICS regularly to XYZ (as well as to a score of other individuals). We have also sent him some books and will be glad to forward any our readers may want to send him.—ED.

PERSECUTION OF BRITISH ANARCHISTS

Sir:

I think you will be interested in the following information concerning what might well become a general persecution of radical thought in this country.

The anarchists, naturally enough, are among the first to have been attacked. The chief excuse seems to have been that they distributed revolutionary pamphlets to members of the forces, although this was done quite legally, by selling them to soldiers who ordered them.

The matter was precipitated on the 12th December, when a squad of the Special Branch—the English semi-secret political police—invaded the offices of Freedom Press, the anarchist publishers, with search warrants under Regulation 39A. These warrants authorised them to take away any objects which they had reasonable ground for believing to be evidence of the commission of an attempt to seduce from their duties persons in His Majesty's service. The authority of the police was therefore clearly defined, but

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the procedure they adopted was, to quote from *War Commentary*, "to empty the contents from the different letter trays straight into sacks, seize invoices and account books which dealt entirely with transactions with bookshops and bundle them into sacks as well, seize the office typewriter and boxes containing stencils of addresses, letter books and other material without which it is virtually impossible to run a concern like Freedom Press". Most of this material was kept for almost two months, and as the majority of it was irrelevant to the offence which the police are atempting to prove, it is impossible to see any reason for their actions except deliberate obstruction and victimisation.

In addition to the raid on Freedom Press, the police made at least six other raids on the homes of people connected with or sympathetic with Freedom Press. In these raids professional notes, personal correspondence and literary manuscripts were taken away—material which only the most stupid policeman could have regarded as relevant evidence. One of the houses raided was that of a surrealist not even directly connected with the anarchist movement. The day after the raid a Special Branch detective appeared to say that he had always been interested in surrealism, and would like to join the surrealist movement!

In the army and navy searches were made in the kits of a number of men who had made contact with Freedom Press. Copies of *Peace News* and *War Commentary*, as well as pamphlets, were confiscated. Some of these men were 'persuaded' to sign statements.

These raids have a certain terroristic element which reminds one of the raids carried out by Nazis and Fascists on rival newspaper offices during the early days of those regimes so much condemned by the masters of the Special Branch.

So far, no direct attempt to prosecute or close down Freedom Press has been made, but this is still, apparently, a possibility. What has happened is a series of curious coincidental events which have no obvious and open connection with the police raids, but which seem to take their place in the scheme of persecution.

First, Freedom Press received notice from the landlord of their premises forbidding them to carry on business there any more. Negotiations were opened for new premises, but were broken off abruptly by the owners, who would give no reason for their actions. The latest event is a notification from the paper merchants to say that they cannot supply any more newsprint to Freedom Press. The interplay of official and unofficial persecution is certainly becoming elaborate. It looks as though the authorities would much sooner see the anarchists find their work impossible from lack of premises, paper etc., than risk a public scandal by acting in too direct a manner.

The Special Branch, by the way, is the political section of the London police, but it operates throughout the country. It was started in a small way some years back, but since the war seems to have grown to quite considerable proportions, though details of its size and finances are not made very public. It would be an excellent nucleus for the building of a future OGPU or Gestapo.

LONDON, ENGLAND — GEORGE WOODCOCK

—News has just come that four British anarchists (including Mary Louise Berneri, author of the pamphlet on Russia advertised on page 112 of this issue) were arrested at their homes on February 22, charged with "endeavoring to seduce from their duties persons in the Forces." "Politics" has made a contribution to the Defense Fund, and urges its readers to do so as well. Send contributions either to us or direct to: Freedom Press, 84-A Whitechapel High St., London, E.I., England.—ED.

CONTRIBUTORS

Frank Marquart is Educational Director of Local 212, UAW-CIO. . . . **Victor Serge**, formerly the editor of the "Communist International", was banished from Russia in 1936; he now lives in Mexico City. . . . **Francy Calhoun** lives in Seattle, Wash.; she is the wife of Don Calhoun, whose "The Political Relevance of Conscientious Objection" appeared in our July 1944, issue. . . . **Dachine Rainer** lives in New York City; she writes poetry and political criticism.

Corrections:

There was a treacherous misprint in last month's "Comment" paragraph on the American Historical Association election: Carlton J. H. Hayes was described as "an ardent admirer of France"; the last word should have been "Franco", of course.

The Editor apologizes for inserting the name of H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills in the wrong order into Meyer Schapiro's piece on Weber in the February issue. The correct order is as it is here written.

COMING IN EARLY ISSUES:

P.-J. Proudhon: **The Revolution in the 19th Century** ***(Selections, with an Introductory Essay)***

Spotlight on the Michigan Commonwealth Federation ***(Discussion by Daniel Bell, Frank Marquart, and others)***

Dwight Macdonald: **The Root Is Man** ***(Toward a new political approach)***

Paul Goodman: **The Political Meaning of some Recent Revisions of Freud**

Ignazio Silone: **For a New Socialist Morality** ***(an article just received from Italy)***

Jean Malaquais: **Louis Aragon, or the Professional Patriot**

Lionel Abel: **James Burnham as Stalin's Advocate**

Virgil J. Vogel: **A Note on Soviet Education**

Nancy Macdonald: **Are Hospitals Made for Patients, or Vice Versa?**

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